



# LITERARY Cavalcade

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## Lesson Plans

### Topics for Discussion

### Activities

### Vocabulary

### Reading Lists

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## One-Period Lesson Plan

### Theme

In our relationships with other people we can find some of life's most rewarding experiences.

### Aim

To point out to students that many of the good things of life could not be fully realized or enjoyed if we had no friends and family to share them with.

### Motivation

Would the satisfactions that life offers you mean as much if you were unable to share them with your friends or family? Would your own goals for the future have as much meaning for you, if you could not expect them to go hand in hand with full and rewarding human relationships?

### Topics for Discussion

#### The Rocking Horse (p. 22)

1. *Family ties.* Do you think that family love and unity represent an ideal that most people would like to achieve? Do you believe that this ideal can be realized only if each member of the family group considers the welfare of the other members before his own?

2. *The needs of youth.* What made Corky feel that his mother had selfishly deprived him of family life and affection? Did his memories of Wag, the rocking horse, increase his bitterness about his lost childhood? In what way? Had Corky established a family life for his son that was rich and happy enough to help make up for his own unfortunate childhood? Do you think that Corky's experience had led him to place an even greater value on family life than most people do?

3. *The problems of parenthood.* Had Corky's mother really deserted him because she was selfish and disloyal? Or had she actually worked to the best of her ability to do what she could for her son? Do you think a mother who

cannot see any possibility of providing a home for her child in the near future is justified in allowing him to be adopted by people who can give him such a home?

4. *The spirit of forgiveness.* Do you think that Corky forgave his mother, once he had met her and heard her story? If so, why didn't he immediately reveal his identity to her? Do you think that the fact that he asked her to come to his home is an indication that he meant to tell her who he was after the first strangeness of their situation had worn off?

#### The Tiger's Tale (p. 12)

Phrase the moral of this fable in your own words. Do you think that the monk deserved the treatment he received at the hands of the farmer? Or did the farmer carry his point too far? Is there something to be said for the philosophies of both the monk and the farmer?

#### Luzina Takes a Holiday (p. 27)

1. *Meeting people with an open heart.* Why do you suppose it was that Luzina always met so many likable people in the course of her travels? Do you think that meeting people you can like has anything to do with the kind of person you yourself happen to be? Do you agree with the statement that "every human being, the moment necessity forces us to seek his kindness, eagerly offers it in our behalf"? Did Luzina act this way toward others?

2. *The love of home.* Why do you think it was that Luzina always yearned to get back to her "lonely gray house," even though she thoroughly enjoyed the experiences she had during her journeys? Was it the house itself and the countryside around it that drew her back, or the spirit that dwelt among the family who lived there? In what way had Luzina herself contributed to the warm spirit that existed in that little

gray house? Do you believe that family affection and unity are more important than good housing and physical comforts? If your own family lived in a much less comfortable house than you now have, would you still be anxious to come home when you were far away?

#### The Trespasser (p. 18)

In this story Steve gives up his own life to save that of his friend and platoon leader. Do you think a person who values such ideas as friendship, loyalty, freedom, honor, etc., above his personal interests, or even above his own life, is foolish or admirable? Discuss.

Is there any indication in this story that Steve's family, despite the bitterness of their loss, are fine enough people to understand how Lt. Merrick feels on his visit? Discuss.

#### King in Shag (p. 5)

1. *Majesty of nature.* Can you understand how John's "love of all great beasts" and his awe for the majesty of nature's pageant made the mammoth seem more important to him than any single individual? Even though you may sympathize with his feeling, do you feel that he would have been justified in actually shooting his friend? If you were a member of a trial jury deciding whether or not John should be punished for shooting a man, what would be your decision?

2. *Scientific background.* This is a skillfully written story about something that could conceivably happen. Point out details the author gives you—about the valley (its unusual climate, etc.) and about mammoths—that help build up your belief in the possible existence of such a beast.

3. *Friendship.* Discuss the friendship of John and Russ. What common interests made it easy for them to become intimate? Do you think the fact that John would have shot his friend rather than see him kill the mammoth meant that his friendship for Russ was insincere? Do you think it possible for two people to be very close, and yet have

certain ideals and beliefs that they would place above the interests of any human being—no matter how good a friend? Do you think this kind of friendship is more—or less—admirable than the kind of friendship in which one friend would “do anything” for the other?

#### Girl with a Basket (p. 10)

1. *Open mind.* In the introduction to his book *Strange Lands and Friendly People*, Justice Douglas explains why he made his trip to the Middle East: “I wanted to see for myself” and “to understand the forces” at play in a crucial area of the world. Can you find any statement in the incident he tells about the girl with the basket which indicates this attitude of eagerness to learn and listen?

2. *Self-respect.* What quality did Justice Douglas particularly admire in the nine-year-old Indian girl who sold him the basket? Do you think that Justice Douglas possesses this quality himself? Discuss how another, less sensitive person than Justice Douglas might have reacted to the incident he describes.

3. *Broader application.* In the light of this incident, comment on the following statement: “The United States will be defeating its own aims in providing relief to impoverished countries if that relief is offered at the price of the self-respect of the citizens to whom it is given.”

#### Miss Moonlight (p. 1)

1. *Girl meets boy.* Do you believe that every girl has a right to expect a boy to show her such courtesies as opening doors? Name some things a girl can do to earn such courtesies. How, for instance, did Barbie succeed in making Frost's attitude toward her a more courteous one?

2. *Going half-way.* Do you think that Barbie's new dress and her efforts to be more feminine would have attracted Frost in themselves, or had Barbie already “gone half-way” in being friends with him by appreciating the things he was interested in?

#### Suggested Activities

##### The Trespasser (p. 18)

Study the illustrations of this story after you've read it. Study first the smaller drawings which show what happened on the battlefield to Lt. Merrick and Steve. There you can see the exact sequence of the events immediately preceding Steve's death, as Steve (wearing the colored helmet) starts out behind Lt. Merrick—draws up closer—and then rushes ahead of him.

Then look at the illustration as a whole. The “flash-back” technique makes vivid the theme that in wartime even a comfortable home, far from the

scene of battle, is in a real sense part of the battlefield.

#### Who Wants a New Car? (p. 3)

List some of the examples of humor in this essay under the headings: (1) the ability to laugh at oneself; (2) exaggeration; (3) the discovery of the funny side of an experience which might otherwise be dull or even irritating. Could the subject-matter of this essay have been treated without humor by another person who had the same experiences?

#### Young Voices (p. 14)

1. “*The Tall Tale.*” Some of the best advice that can be given to young writers is to keep close to their own experience in choosing subjects. Yet the student-author of “*The Tall Tale*” is successful in telling her story from an older man's point of view. Do you think one reason she is successful is that this story is a flash-back of the experience of a young boy?

2. “*Come Formal.*” Do you think that the author of “*Come Formal.*” in writing about people close to her own age-level, chose material which she could handle realistically and sympathetically? Do you think that her technique of shifting back and forth between the boy's point of view and the girl's point of view increases the effectiveness of the story?

3. “*The Rose.*” This poem is as suggestive to the imagination as it is pleasing to the ear. Do you find that the poem stirs your imagination? Describe your own idea of the story that might be behind “*The Rose.*” Do you think it is the kind of poem that also reminds you of experiences that you yourself have had?

#### VOCABULARY EXERCISES

On a sheet of paper, number from one to fifteen. I will read each of the following sentences slowly, stressing the key word. Each key word is taken from this issue of *Literary Cavalcade*. Next I shall read three possible definitions of the word. Only one definition is correct. Beside the appropriate number on your paper, write the letter of the correct definition. When you've finished, exchange papers with a student near you, and we'll check the correct answers.

(Note to teacher: Your key to the correct definition is the answer given in italics.)

1. Barbara smiled at Thomas with *spurious* sympathy. a. deep, profound; b. false, counterfeit; c. friendly

2. His personality abounded in odd little *crotchets*. a. fancies, whimsies; b. prejudices; c. opinions

3. The *hoary* mountain range

stretched out in the distance. a. green; b. white; c. forbidding

4. The men could not rest until they had *cashed* their gold. a. cashed; b. discovered; c. hidden

5. Mr. Fritch prided himself that his own record was *inviolate*. a. uncolored by violence; b. enviable; c. unspoiled, uncorrupted

6. Much *edification* may be gained from observing others. a. amusement; b. food for thought; c. instruction by example

7. He turned away with *aversion*. a. fear; b. dislike; c. indifference

8. The vast *moraine* stretched endlessly before us. a. inland body of water; b. desert area; c. pile of earth and stones deposited by a glacier

9. After a serious illness, the old man *rebounded*. a. sprung back; b. relapsed; c. convalesced

10. A colored *lithograph* hung on the wall. a. water color; b. oil painting; c. print

11. Three Rivers Junction is the *terminus* of the bus route. a. terminal building; b. termination, limit; c. destination

12. James' travels had made a *polyglot* of him. a. explorer; b. geographical authority; c. master of many languages

13. Despite its unattractive *facade*, the hotel had a pleasant interior. a. surroundings; b. arrangement of pillars; c. front, or face of a building

14. On a warm spring day, there is likely to be a *listless* air in the classroom. a. romantic; b. happy-go-lucky; c. inactive, motionless

15. Mrs. Fowler's ugly hat *epitomized* the bad taste of her whole wardrobe. a. summed up; b. contradicted; c. offset

#### Answers to

##### “What Do You Remember?”

“Miss Moonlight”: b.  
“King in Shag”: 1-a(A), b(B), c(A); 2-b, c.  
“The Trespasser”: 1-b; 2-a, b, c.

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Illustration by Katherine Churchill Tracy

## Miss Moonlight

By MARY KNOWLES

**It was only a moth-hunt to Frost—until he saw Barbie was fluttering from a silky cocoon**

MARCH, 1952

**B**ARBIE danced around the rumpus room with Frost, her heart beating in a heavy, achy way.

"I'm doing okay, huh?" Frost grinned down at her from his lanky height. Frost was seventeen and terrific. No wonder Carol Taylor was going for him in a big way.

"You're doing swell, Frost." Frost had been a hopeless case. Now he was a better dancer than any of the other boys.

The other boys. She thought bitterly how the week after Carol Taylor moved into town, one by one the boys had come to her: "Hey, Barbie, can you teach me to dance in time for the Junior Country Club party?"

She hadn't minded the others falling for Carol so much. But Frost! She and Frost had been like *that*. Why, they'd gone hunting moths and butterflies in Southfork swamps with flashlight and net. Together they had mounted the specimens and classified them.

Then one day Frost had told her, "Carol's given me a date for the dance." And Barbie had wanted to cry.

Now the record stuck and Barbie went to turn it off, her brown braids whirling. "Let's quit," she said.

Frost didn't seem to hear. He came loping over to the phonograph. "Tomorrow's the big night, Barbie."

Tomorrow night, Black Friday. Nobody had asked her for a date. She banged shut the lid of the phonograph.

"Aren't we going to dance any more?" Frost asked.

"No, you're good enough." She went to the work corner at the end of the rumpus room and stood looking down at the oblong case on the table. Butterflies and moths made a bright circle on the mat of black velvet.

Frost said with admiration, "A nice collection."

Barbie pointed to the space in the middle. "I'm saving that for a Luna moth."

Frost said, "I'm giving my Luna to Carol."

Barbie knew how a moth must feel when you dipped its head in chloroform. She remembered the night he'd caught the Luna. She had bargained shamelessly—her twelve-dollar baseball mitt, she'd carry his paper route.

He'd said, "Nuts! I wouldn't part with this—ever!"

Now he was going to give it to Carol. That was the cruelest cut of all. She said thickly, "You'd better go!"

He took hold of her arm. "Are you mad at me?"

"Of course I'm not!" Her voice squeaked on the words. "Gotta take a bath!"

Barbie ran up the stairs to her bedroom. She was glad her mother was at her bridge club and Mona was shopping for her trousseau. She heard Frost's jalopy bang up the street, and then she threw herself on the bed and howled.

"Barbie, what's the matter, honey?"

"What are you doing h-home?" Barbie sobbed.

"John is coming over. Now what's the matter?"

Barbie sobbed out everything.

"That Frost!" Mona exclaimed. "Honestly, the way he drives up in that car and never even holds the door open for you!"

"Why should he? I'm not crippled."

"A boy should always hold the car door open for a girl he likes. Being a tomboy is fine up to a certain point, honey, but sixteen is too old to be treated like one."

"I wouldn't be like Carol Tavor. She's a goop."

"She's a smart little cookie," Mona said wisely. "She looks feminine and helpless, and do the boys fall for it!"

"But what can I do?" Barbie moaned.

"You can go feminine, too. There's a

## About the Author

Mary Knowles is the mother of three teen-agers—two boys and a girl—and for all we know she writes from experience in describing the ups and downs of the teen-agers in this charming short story. *Miss Moonlight* is one of her first short stories and one of her first stories about teen-agers. She is well known as the author of longer stories, usually with a family background, that have appeared in *The American Magazine*, *Woman's Day*, *Today's Woman* and other popular publications.

Mary Knowles grew up in Utah—minus one year spent in South America when her father was working on an engineering project. She first began to write seriously after she was married and her children had started to school. Now she says that she gets story ideas from week-end trips and from the things that happen every day in her family of five. Last year she came close to setting a record by publishing eleven stories.

darling pink net formal at Goode's. When Frost sees you in that—"

"But I haven't a date for the dance, Mona!"

"Len Hayes—one of John's college friends—will take you. He's twenty-one, a little old for you, but it is the best we can do at such short notice. You don't want another girl to steal your boyfriend, do you?"

Barbie stood before the mirror the next night and felt hopeful. In the pink net formal she looked like a butterfly that has just emerged from an ugly cocoon.

Dad gave a satisfying wolf call: "Young man in the parlor for Miss Barbara Holland."

Len Hayes was sitting on the divan holding a corsage box. He wore the look of a patient in a dentist's office.

Mona said, "Len, this is Barbie."

Len got to his feet and grinned, "Well, hello, Barbie," as happy as if the dentist had said, "No decays this time." He handed her the florist box. White baby orchids.

"Thank you!"

"Thank you," he said.

They went out. It was a clear night with a full moon. A perfect night for moth hunting, Barbie thought.

Len went around the side of the car and opened the door for her. She felt suddenly poised and adult. This certainly beat diving through the window of Frost's car as it started. She sank back, and no broken spring pierced her back as it did with Frost's jalopy. All at once she felt feminine and protected. In some

ways this beat hunting moths in South-fork swamps.

At the dance she was almost having fun, when Frost came in with Carol. He said, "Hi, Barbie," in his moth-hunting voice. Later, Barbie heard Carol tell Sally, "Frost is coming to my barbecue tomorrow night." And Barbie wished she were dead.

Next morning she drooped around the house. She was trying to work on her moths when the telephone rang.

It was Frost. "Are you going to be home tonight?"

"Sure." He wasn't going to Carol's!

"Okay, about eight, then."

Mona had been right. And Frost was coming over for a date. Maybe they'd go dancing, or to a movie.

Barbie knew she looked special in the white pique dress and high-heeled sandals that night. She opened the door wide to Frost's ring, and gulped. He was wearing his oldest clothes. He exploded. "You can't go hunting moths in those clothes!"

"Hunting moths?"

"You don't think I'd do anything else on a night like this, do you?"

What was wrong with her, anyhow, Barbie wondered as she changed clothes. This was what she had wanted. And yet her stomach felt as if it were filled with ice cubes.

Frost was waiting in the rumpus room by the moth case. "How does it look?" he asked.

Barbie felt as if a giant moth was beating like crazy against her heart. Frost's Luna moth was mounted in the center of her display in all its lustrous green beauty. "Oh, Frost!"

"Is Carol ever a lame-brain." Frost pulled a face. "She said, 'What a pretty bug!' Bug—the Luna, Barbie! Thought I'd give it to someone who appreciated it."

"Thank you, Frost." Barbie felt all melty inside.

Frost said gruffly, "Well, come on."

Flashlight and net in hand, she followed Frost outside. It was a perfect night for hunting moths. She should be delirious with joy, but she wasn't.

She had liked last night. Wearing a pink net formal and having a boy look at you as if he knew you were a girl. But Frost would never do that. She would always be just a pal to him. She walked around the side of the jalopy, and then stopped, and she felt stunned and solemn and very special.

Frost was holding the car door open for her.

Very sedately, holding her shirttail up, she climbed in and settled back, and as they bumped along she didn't even feel the broken spring piercing her back.

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# Who Wants a New Car?

By ROBERT M. YODER

It takes a brave man—or a humorist—to see anything funny about owning an old car



Illustration by William Hogarth

**S**ITTING at the wheel of my tried and true automobile, veteran of the 'thirties, I'll admit an occasional twinge of envy for all the people whipping along in noiseless new models; but the attitude I'm working on now is one of gentle, well-bred scorn. The attitude, roughly, of a cold-shower man toward a warm-shower man; of a hardy outdoorsman (I wonder if I asked the garage to fix that heater knob?) toward an effete office worker.

I have abandoned the remark about how they're not putting the stuff in the new cars that they used to; it was exhausting my friends to think up snide rejoinders. "Never did learn the secret of that Damascus steel, did they?" one of them said as he touched my fender in spurious admiration. Others pointed out that it's tough to find good acetylene lamps and isinglass side curtains these days. And more of the same.

## A Flashy Model

That last is plain libel. Mine is a very flashy convertible. It simply happens to have stood the test of time. I don't think of it as old, simply as an Older Car, using the comparative the

way real-estate dealers do when they speak of an Older House (and they can do that with such respect as to make you think, for a moment, that indoor plumbing was a step backward).

It is a good-looking car even now, especially since it was painted. Before that, the paint had peeled off the trunk, producing the appearance you see in horses that have been rubbing their rumps against a fence or a rough-barked tree. Even so, it didn't look bad, it was the new top that more or less called for the painting. Added to a cauliflower fender or two and the unpainted trunk, the new top made the car look like a man in a new twenty-dollar hat but with his suit shiny and threadbare.

Since the redecoration, my car is as good-looking as many of the new ones and—here's the point I have been looking for—many times more interesting. A child can handle a new car. To operate this car of mine takes understanding, takes what we executives like to call know-how, and when you get somewhere and back, you have a sense of adventure going and coming, and a feeling of accomplishment.

Just last night, for example, I made a short run to a nearby delicatessen. In a new car, that would have been a dull jaunt indeed. In mine, it was packed with thrills. On the route, I passed a motorist who had forgotten to turn on his lights; no doubt he thought that's done automatically in today's voluptuous models. I blinked mine at him once, in a friendly sneer. Thereafter, my lights went out every time I threw in the clutch, the car operating on the principle that if it was only coasting the driver didn't need to see where he was going. I must have left a dozen motorists talking to themselves about the four-wheeled *Flying Dutchman* that had come upon them blinking like a lightning bug.

In my earliest youth, the Model T's had lights something like that; if you wanted to make out a signpost, you raced the motor, which made the lights brighter. In this car, if you want to make out a signpost you have to run into it, which is considerably more sporting.

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### Always Exotic

I don't recommend that kind of travel; in fact, they are huddling over the case in the garage this morning. "Huddling" is just what I mean. When I bring that car in, rarely fewer than half a dozen mechanics come to look at it, the way doctors would cluster around a unique case of Riveter's Fidgets. The trouble rarely is major, but almost invariably is exotic. Nobody yet knows, for instance, why the horn gets silent at intervals. It sings out commandingly most of the time—if you can find that segment of the little semicircle on the steering wheel to which it is responding at the moment. But the next day, for a quiet period of perhaps an hour or so, it won't work at all.

The ammeter fascinates the mechanics, too. On an ordinary car, that lackluster instrument never says anything except "Charge" or "Discharge." On my car, the needle quivers like a compass in a magnet factory or a bird dog baffled but happy in the birdhouse of the Bronx Zoo. It has moments of despondency when the needle pitches so far on the discharge side as to be almost out of sight.

That doesn't mean a thing, except possibly some complicated short by which the generator is running backward and developing cosmic rays, or putting a light charge of magnetism into the shock absorbers that will make the car pick up nails and small bolts. Knock on the glass as you would on a door, and just as roguishly, the needle pops back into action. As far as the experts can tell, it never records exactly what's going on electrically. Quite possibly I'd rather not know.

### Rat-it-tat-tat

Most motors are of little interest, when running properly. But in this tuneful car of mine, you listen as intently as the pilot of a transatlantic plane, and have some of the same fine, expert feeling—which the new-car driver misses—when you identify a distinctive clatter or rasp. The flapping, which would cause most drivers to stop and see what they've picked up on the left front tire, I recognize, for example, as a case of early-morning piston. At least, that is the theory at the garage.

The noise is hearsay to them; it appears on cold mornings, and an impressive little racket it can be, too, causing fellow motorists to stare wonderingly. But the sound ceases in exactly the amount of driving necessary to get the car to the garage. And ordinary examination has failed to reveal anything, except that one corner of the radiator seems to be rotting away and that a little work on the floor

boards would make the car quit accelerating when you put on the brakes.

So the case was solved by a form of Twenty Questions. Does it go *hirsh*, *hirsh*? Does it sound like six marbles in a washing machine? When we got it down to *putt-it-ta-tatt*, *putt-it-ta-tatt*—a noise produced when the car is in gear—the board of inquiry was able, by ignoring that last factor resolutely, to establish this as a piston slap. I once told a doctor that what I had couldn't be appendicitis, my appendix having been removed some years before. "That ruins an otherwise perfect case of appendicitis," he said a little grumpily, and I am beginning to understand how he felt. If this isn't piston trouble, we are treating it as if it were, come what probably will.

Last week's new noise was all too clearly the generator. The generator developed a loud, insistent whine exactly in front of the church, as I delivered some children to Sunday school, and the car got far more attention than the church bells, for which it was providing a heathenish accompaniment. What havoc such behaviour would wreak in a normal car I have no idea; mine never ran better. It reminded you of a kid sprinting happily with a toy that makes more noise the faster he runs.

At the garage—drive it in slowly, they warned me—they didn't even attempt to unravel the problem. They had another generator on hand and bolted it in. "Will you try to rebuild my old one?" I asked. The head mechanic said he didn't think so, mentioning that a good rental battery I had for a while never thereafter worked right in another car.

### No Jinx

That is obviously superstition; my car is not a jinx. It simply has reached an age where machines, like humans, develop little crotchets. The trunk un-

locks fine, for instance, if you park the car with the front wheels a little lower than the rear. And just as there are days when the smaller of the right front windows responds to the crank with all the snap of a well-oiled Springfield rifle, there are days when anybody can get the hood open. Those are the days when the car gets oil.

It takes a little more knowing than a new car, is all, a little more expert handling; just as people with a good deal of personality take more handling than those who are routine and colorless. It doesn't merit the crack the garage proprietor made. He was looking over a pamphlet about a remarkable machine, slightly less intricate than an automobile itself, that diagnoses automotive disorders. You put the car on a rack, and six or seven dials record everything from a slight binding by the left rear brake to a tendency toward knock-knees on the part of the owner's daughter. The proprietor looked from my car to the picture of this tattle-tale gadget to my car again. "Boy!" he said at last. "It would be like hitting the highest score on a pinball machine."

He had better not get me sore, for if I buy a new car, his repair department will look as bare as an empty warehouse, and a good many regular customers will back out, with an apology, on the theory they are in the wrong place. It's getting so I don't take the car in to the garage; I take it out, like a book from the library. I have avoided getting anything like a general overhauling. It may be that what keeps the car running so smoothly, most of the time, is compensating errors. The wrong repairs, here and there, might well prove fatal.

To get back to my original theme: Owning a car like mine is far more venturesome than owning a new one. It's the difference between *Little Women* and *Mutiny on the Bounty*; between Evanston, Illinois, I like to think, and Singapore; between crossing the ocean in the *Queen Mary* or in a rowboat.

New cars are all right for the tame and timid, but it's an old car every time for the man who likes a little variety, a little excitement, and relishes the zest of the unknown. Which reminds me—I forgot to ask them, after they fixed the heater so it warms passengers instead of blowing a beneficent blast on the oil filter, to find out why this baby refuses to shift into first, now and then. (It's no trouble, really, except that you can't get moving; and what is this mad rushing around getting us, anyway?) I must remember to ask them delicately, just in case I am persuaded, someday, to trade my car in.

### About the Author

Robert M. Yoder may be the harassed owner of an old car, but as a free lance writer he is a whopping success. His pieces—usually humorous—appear frequently in national publications.

He grew up in Illinois, attended the University of Wisconsin and the University of Illinois Law School, then broke into newspaper work. A daily editorial column "Sharps and Flats" won him national recognition. A collection of the columns was published under the title *There's No Place Like Home*.

He says he is a "very much baffled young man in that I live in a suburb of Philadelphia that I cannot pronounce. Let's see if I can spell it—C-y-n-w-y-d."



By ROBERT W. KREPPS

What was this secret of the lonely man in the lost valley—  
this secret more important than the life of a friend?



**I**N THE least-known region of continental Alaska, beyond the barrier of a hoary mountain range, lies the valley. It is one of those strange, hidden patches of earth that used to be called "fur pockets."

Shut off on the west by the great snow-shrouded range, and on the east by a lower scarp of glacier-hacked rock, it forms a long, green-brown, oblong patch about the size of an English

county. Access to it may be had through either end, with some difficulty; or from the air.

If Indians ever found it, they have left no trace behind them. It is not, however, virgin soil; not unexplored. In the early years of this century, a Yukon prospector turned trapper came through the grove of balsam poplar that masks the lower entrance, cached his sled (which was later torn to pieces by wolves, who ate the leather fittings), and took his dogs over the ragged chine of rubble into the valley, where he set

out a line of traps for sable marten. For a long time his skull, gnawed and polished by a family of brown bears, lay caught in the roots of an old dead willow; it may be there yet.

His dogs went wild, fought, hunted, watched their numbers grow less, and in time left the valley in a pack, to be swallowed up in the secret fastnesses of the cold country.

Forty-odd years later, another white man found the fur pocket. He read the signs of this ancient tragedy—chance-found bits of the sledge, a rotted cabin

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with a few poor ruined personal effects not quite moldered away, and the skull, which he thought it foolish to consider burying at this late date—and, after one trip to Nome to arrange his affairs, he moved in.

He built himself a cabin, put out traps of his own, and settled down to stay.

Every four months supplies were flown in, and pelts taken out, by a friend of this man. The plane was an amphibian, and landed on the tiny lake near the bottom of the valley.

The man who lived in the valley was named John Mycroft.

The seventh time his friend came in, he brought a passenger: Russ Langan. Me. . .

We crossed the towering range, which stretched from horizon to horizon in shining milk-white glory. It seemed so formidably boundless, as we looked down on it, that surely, I thought, it must go on thrusting up its mountains right round the world into infinity. We dropped half a thousand feet, turned in a sharp angle, and flew along the length of the valley. A few miles ahead, the blue-pink splotch of the lake appeared. Shortly we could see the big wind streaks on its surface, then the ripples, and just before the amphibian was set down, Dolly Varden trout leaping in the sun.

Kirk brought her smoothly in to a halt near the shore. He tugged on hip boots and gave me a pair. We took a box of supplies apiece and waded through bitterly cold water to the beach, which was covered with green spring sedge and the saffron-colored remains of last year's grass. We made three trips and emptied the plane. Then we sat down on the boxes, lighted our pipes and waited.

The air was chill—not bleak, but refreshing—so that after a minute or two we began to walk up and down, stamping our feet and snorting like horses eager for a run. "Makes you want to light out and stalk a moose or something, doesn't it?" Kirk said. "There's a feel in the breeze like shooting weather."

"Ah," said I, agreeing. I stuck my hands into the pockets of my hunting outfit. It had been expensive when I bought it, and was mellowed by now to a gray and serviceable maturity; over my shoulders I had draped a parka, trimmed with glossy wolverine fur, that I'd borrowed from Kirk. "So this is the valley," I said. "This is where you saw the big one."

"Couple miles to the north, yes. I only got a half-second look at it, but golly, it was big! I wasn't more than five hundred feet up, and happened to

glance down, and there it was, just going into the trees. I tell you, Russ, it looked as broad as an elephant! Near as I can remember, it was reddish brown, maybe with a black cast to it, too. It must have been a brown bear, but the most terrific brown bear anybody ever laid eyes on."

"Really big, eh?"

"When I remember the size of that back, big is a little word."

"I never shot a brownie. I said, I'm not very keen on shooting for record heads, but—what a brute this must be! I hope your friend hasn't tangled with it yet."

"Here he comes now," Kirk said, nodding inland. "Must have been watching for me. Cooe, John!"

JOHN Mycroft waved an arm above his head. He came up, grounded his rifle butt in the sedge, and looked uncertainly from Kirk to me and back again. "Hello, Kirk," he said.

"John, this is my brother Russ. I've told you about him."

We shook hands. "Last I heard of you, you were lost in the Congo, Russ," he said.

"I wasn't lost. I was living in a pygmy village."

"And too busy to send word outside for ten months," Kirk said.

"Wasn't busy, either. Simply didn't have anything to say." It was true. I hadn't seen any sense in sending a messenger over the long, dangerous distances of the forest with a letter saying that all was well and I was having a wonderful time. My family is supposed to know I can take care of myself. John Mycroft gazed at me with approval, as though he could sympathize with my attitude.

"You've seen a host of places, Kirk tells me. I'd like to talk with you. Come up to the cabin?"

"John, I can't stay," Kirk said. "I've got a date in Nome tonight." He glanced at me. "But Russ here, if it's okay with you, wants to stay awhile." He coughed uncomfortably. "Two weeks, if it's okay, John."

The man's face did not change, yet there was suddenly a reluctance, almost a hostility, in him, that I could feel clearly.

Before he could speak, I said, "You can tell me no, and I'll fly back with Kirk and no hard feelings. I realize this is your private preserve."

"No, no. I don't own the place. You're welcome. I'll be glad of the company."

"I'm sorry we couldn't give you some notice. It's a spur-of-the-moment deal. Kirk's written me so much about this valley, I felt I had to see it and hunt a

little in it. I'm a what-d'you-call-it—a cheechako; I'm new to the country, and you know it down to its boot soles. I'd like to team up with you for these two weeks. Any pelts I take would be yours. I don't collect trophies, and they'd be some return for your time."

John Mycroft shook his head irritably, as if the suggestion were dishonest. Leaning on his rifle, he might have been a Kaintuck hunter straight out of Fenimore Cooper. He was nearly as dark as I, and where I'm built like a stocky bear, he was long and lean and tough as a panther. He had a sinewy face with raven-wing eyebrows and blue eyes. He was dressed in turs of various kinds, some worn and others lustroly new. "You're not putting me to any inconvenience. I haven't hunted since the wolves came down last winter. It'll take the kinks out of me. And you've been in Africa," he said. "That clinches it. Happy to have you, and you can tell me all about Africa."

"Fine. But the pelts are yours. I can't agree, otherwise."

"All right, then!" There was still, behind his eyes, a queer reluctance that had nothing to do with pelts. "If you honestly don't want 'em. What guns did you bring?"

"A .30-06 and a .375 Magnum."

"Good enough. There's big game to the north."

"That's what Kirk told me. Some of the biggest bears alive."

"I have to shove off," my brother said. "See you guys in fourteen days." He shook hands with us and waded out to his plane.

"Let's move this gear," John Mycroft said. "Cabin's only a quarter of a mile. We'll sit around and talk tonight. I want to hear about Africa. Know anything about climatology?"

"Nothing technical. I know it gets hot on the desert and cold on the tundra, and that almost exhausts my knowledge." I shouldered a box and slung my rifles over the other arm. "That's your work, isn't it? Climatology?"

"Yes. I'm an independent, and trap for my expenses. That's why I'm here. This pocket's a sort of phenomenon. By right, it ought to be permanently frozen halfway down to the core of the world, but it isn't. Any other valley this deep, sheltered by those mountains, would never thaw, even in summer. Yet in February the earth under the snow isn't too hard to turn with a sharp spade. I don't know, it's a funny place. It fascinates me."

We went toward the cabin, and I listened to him with half an ear while I tried to decide what was annoying him. I couldn't place the trouble, but

it was there. John Mycroft was hospitable, as men are in the north and in all such lonely places. He was obviously glad to have someone to talk with; his pale, intelligent eyes were friendly when he looked at me. Still, there it was—an aura of uneasiness, a sort of awkward constraint that I could feel under my skin but couldn't draw out into the light. It reminded me of the premonition you feel when there's going to be trouble in Africa. Your flesh crawls now and again, you find yourself looking over your shoulder, you start to sweat, and then at last the drums begin to throb and the trouble is out in the open.

I laughed at myself. There was a less dramatic simile that was nearer the truth. The emotion I could feel in John Mycroft was as near as could be to jealousy.

He seemed to like me well enough, he looked forward to some good hunters' talk, he wanted to show me this pet valley of his, and yet he was a little jealous of it. He'd have liked to keep it inviolate, all to himself, his virgin vale behind the ranges. Poor devil! It had been impudent of me to come in without notifying him first.

The cabin was small and neatly made, with a meat cache jutting out beside the door. Six or seven Malemutes, heavy gray beasts with plenty of wolf in their lineage, lolled nearby. They were not tied, and came, stiff-legged and suspicious, to greet me.

"Gently, gently," Mycroft said. I put out my free hand, knuckles foremost, and the dogs sniffed at it one by one. Then they fell aside to let us pass.

That night the talk was high and robust. We ranged over the world together, shooting lions, stalking bighorns, galloping noble stallions down through remembered gorges, walking untold miles for a glimpse of sunrise on the veld; we spoke of animals and men, and of places where nothing that lived would ever meet the eye. Nearly-forgotten words came to our tongues; words to call up beauty or violence for one another's edification. We had both been lucky enough to live the sort of life we enjoyed best, each of us free-lancing, myself as a writer and professional hunter, Mycroft as a climatologist and explorer. Liking each other more and more, we talked and smoked till the heels of our brier pipes were soggy and bitter; and Mycroft reached for an old clay, while I rummaged in my kit and brought out my pet pipe, a little white fellow whose barrel-shaped bowl was lined with thin beaten steel.

John Mycroft raised his eyebrows, "There's a strange one."

"It's a Yakut," I handed it over.

"Siberian Indian. Made of fossil mammoth ivory."

"Is it, you say!" He smoothed his finger tips over the bowl. "Like satin. It could be top-grade elephant ivory."

"Well—in a sense, it is. Although this elephant was hairy and preferred a cold climate, and his tusks curled like a Manchu mandarin's nails. The old boy that grew this dentine may have died half a million years ago, or only a very few thousand. Nobody can ever know. That's part of the fascination of the piece." I took it and filled the bowl with tobacco. "I keep it by me wherever I go, to remind me that a man is pretty small potatoes, after all."

He agreed with that, and we talked awhile about mammoth ivory. I told him there'd been a trade in it for centuries, beginning with the Greeks and Romans, and we talked about the whole animals preserved in ice that are found in the north even yet, on which Indians will occasionally feed their families for entire winters. I mentioned that I'd like to try a quick-frozen mammoth steak. He looked rather lofty at that.

"Great shaggy monarchs of the earth!" he said. "Sometimes I picture them roaming the northland, chasing my remote ancestors. I love all great beasts." I remember how that sentence struck me. "I love all great beasts!" He was a fierce and solitary pagan in that moment, repudiating all his years of hunting, and giving tribute of honor to the monstrous gods that walk among us clothed in fur.

I said, "Do you ever wonder if perhaps there are a few mammoths left in the cold places of the world? Don't snicker, man! You've speculated on it, one time or another."

He fastened his hard gaze on my face. At last he said, "Well, yes, I admit I have."

"Everyone with imagination has. You can't help it, when you consider how

many have been found frozen intact."

"It's proved that they've been dead thousands of—"

"Oh, man, I know that! It's simply that you can't believe in your heart of hearts that any animal still existing in the flesh can be wholly extinct. You say to yourself: Why not? You know that plenty of animals living all about you are actually prehistoric. Look at the brown bear. If he isn't the great cave bear, or at least a grandson of that brute, I'll eat him raw. Look at the lizards in Arizona. Look at the monotremes in Australia."

"Not the same thing. Everyone knows they're still around."

I laughed. "Anyway, you'll admit it's a lovely notion."

"That giants still walk the earth? It is a wonderful thought. But a little wild for a stolid climatologist." He gestured at the sleeping bags, then said, "Let's sack up. It's a long day tomorrow."

Lying awake, I blinked at the roof and mused on John Mycroft. I had never met a man whom I took to more quickly. I looked forward avidly to the next two weeks. He had apparently conquered his aversion to guests, whatever caused it, except perhaps there at the last of our talk. For a breath or so I'd felt discomfort in him. Had it been at the mention of giant bears? I couldn't fasten on it. I laughed at myself and went to sleep, to dream of a brown bear as tall as a minaret and as broad as a barn door.

For a week we hunted, going out every day and following a pattern laid down by my host, working the sides of the valley far northward till we were nearly in sight of the other end. We talked—how we talked! Of climate trends and Transvaal politics, of the far reaches of the globe and the philosophy of men who live with the outdoors, and always of animals. We would get back to the cabin at nine or ten o'clock, as the tail of the twilight was vanishing over the range, with our trophies (when we had bagged any) and our joyously tired bodies that ached for rest and food to oil the wheels of more talk. It was as though we had been comrades for half a century.

There was no more hidden reluctance in Mycroft, and already we were planning another hunt for the autumn.

On the ninth day, we went up the east side half a dozen miles to scout for bear spoor. There was a big brownie, Mycroft admitted, that had his den somewhere in the neighborhood. After an hour or so, I killed a big old lone bitch wolf, because Mycroft did not like wolves in his valley. We gave up on the brownie after that, and just



loafed along, kicking at the cream-and-white reindeer moss and telling yarns.

"We're not born hunters," I said to him. "We're natural-born talkers, that's our trouble." I stopped and pointed at a birch tree near the path; the bark had been shredded and hung in strips some six feet above our heads. "Your brownie's been clawing, John. Gosh, he's a gigantic devil, isn't he!"

"One of the biggest I ever saw. I've had a couple of chances at him but we've managed to keep a mutual wary respect going. I don't mind you having a whack at him, though, if that's what you're going to ask. I'm not protecting him. Just never got the urge to go after him."

"Oh. I wondered about that."

"What?"

"Well, I knew there was a thundering big something-or-other in the valley. Kirk saw it the last time he flew out. Said he only caught a glimpse of it below the plane, scooting into the woods; but he could tell the critter was enormous. A phrase he used in his letter stuck in my mind. He said it was as big as an elephant, as a hairy elephant. I realized it must be a granddad brownie, and I yearned for a shot at him. Then, when I came in, I got the impression that you were guarding something pretty jealously, and I figured it was the big bear. So I didn't mention it."

"That was decent of you, Russ. I didn't know it showed. I suppose I've lived here alone too long. I admit to a certain uncomfortable feeling at first. My valley! Like an old woman with a bunch of pet cats."

"You don't care, then, if we try for the bruin?"

"No! Not now! Not since I know you."

"Good deal. We'll sneak up again tomorrow, then."

We went home to the cabin, and everything seemed quite all right; but that evening I could have sworn that trouble was coming. All it would take was a word. I chewed it over in my mind, wondering rather desperately what the word might be. I still thought it might be "bear." Would John pretend to help me search for the big fellow, while actually steering me away from its haunts? I knew him well by now; he was no liar, yet if he had conceived a sort of lorn pagan admiration for the animal, as could have happened to a man cut off from his fellows for so long, then he was capable of lying to protect the brute. "I love all great beasts," he'd said.

Three days we hunted the bear, and did not find him; and the fourth day, which was the thirteenth of my stay in

## About the Author



Robert Krepps has never, of course, seen a live mammoth. The closest he has come to one was putting dinosaur bones together at Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh, Pa.; he was a year out of

college when he was working there and was waiting hopefully for magazines to begin accepting some of his stories. That job, along with a hobbyist's interest in paleontology, gave him the technical facts he needed to spin this yarn on prehistoric beasts. "Finding a real live mammoth," he says, "is something I'd like to have happen."

Mr. Krepps, now 32, is the author of more than 70 short stories and two adventure novels. Back in Langley H.S., in Pittsburgh, he remembers being impressed by a Sinclair Lewis story in *Senior Scholastic*. He began trying to sell stories during his freshman year at Westminster College, made his first sale five years later.

the valley, a cold, sleeting rain came in that all but destroyed the hunting prospects. We endured four or five hours of it, then made for the cabin, where we cooked a couple of ptarmigan and some sweet-fleshed grayling, gorged ourselves despondently, and lay around smoking and talking until bedtime.

The early Alaskan dawn, lifting on a world of clear-skied splendor, found us well on our way to the brownie's home grounds. Each of us carried a .30-'06. We cast about for a while and then found where a big animal had been browsing on sedge near an alder-shaded creek. "He hasn't been out of hibernation more than a few weeks," John Mycroft said. "He's still hungry for anything."

"Including us. Here's his print in the wet moss. What a monster! Let's go."

THE trail took us north, away from the creek and up over a smooth glacia to a crest that overlooked meadows patched with balsam poplar. Here we plucked handfuls of dead saffron grass and tossed them up to test the wind. There was almost no movement in the air, which was clean and bright with sun. We worked down the slope and across the meadows, heading now toward the snow-cowled range through country I had not seen before that morning.

Mycroft found a great hole dug by the nine-inch claws of the brown bear.

"After a ground squirrel. Got him, too."

We passed on and came to a narrow backbone of a moraine—earth and boulders and sharp-edged rock trash discarded by an ancient and long-gone glacier. Ten yards apart, we made our way up to the top, which was ridged with a line of brush standing stiff, like a crude fence, between meadow and meadow. The bear had gone over the spine of the moraine, smashing a gap in the brush fence; I crawled up to this breach, while Mycroft, off to my right, parted the shrubs with his rifle and his ungloved hands.

Before us lay a natural amphitheater, a huge oval of earth carpeted with green sphagnum moss and ringed by spruce woods in tiers on higher ground, like a gallery; behind it, for a back-drop, rose the mighty range. I think I must have gasped at the symmetrical beauty of this colossal arena even before my eyes fell on the single actor upon its stage. Afterward, I focused my popeyed gaze on it and my mouth dropped open and my whole body began to shake—shake with wonder. It was as though the sane core of my mind fell back a little and observed my lying there among the bushes, bereft now of all reason, the poor idiot body quivering in the grip of an astonishment that was close kin to panic terror.

Indeed, the beast was red-brown with here and there a blackish cast to it, as Kirk had said. The hair was so long that in some places it nearly touched the turf, especially that of the chest and shoulders, which fell like a thick, straight cascade of mane. It stood full fourteen feet at its highest point, which was a bulky hump behind the neck; its ears were heavily furred, and its little bright eyes gleamed and blinked in the roan shag of its head. The titanic body sloped off sharply toward the tail. The legs were massive, like tree trunks.

It was just on the fringe of the woods to my right, breaking off twigs of spruce and putting them into its mouth with the delicately questing tip of its trunk. Monstrous ivory tusks, all cream and sleek, thrust out on either side of the trunk and swept up in three-quarter-circle curves, with an outward writhe to them that left the tips far out to left and right of the great head; so lightly were they carried, so graceful were their curvings and perfectly proportioned their tapering thickness, that it was almost impossible to believe that they must weigh hundreds of pounds apiece. Grotesque, enormous, unthinkable, the last mammoth browsed quietly on the tender twigs of the spruce forest.

After a period of time I could not

thereafter calculate, I came back to myself, closed my gaping mouth and shook my head and pushed the rifle forward from beneath my arm. I pointed the muzzle in the general direction of the mammoth and just touched the trigger, but I didn't sight the weapon. My long-fixed hunter's craving to shoot, to bring down that magnificent trophy, was overborne and destroyed. There was a passionate compulsion in me to do nothing, to interfere in no way whatsoever with this unique being. I suppose it was half conscience and half old-Irish superstition. I knew without any doubt that the beast was the last of its race, alive by inconceivable combinations of chance and luck and providence. I could no more have shot it than I could have destroyed the last song in the world or burned the last book.

I kept the .30-06 aimed down at the amphitheater, because it would be a great thing to brag that I had once had a mammoth under my sights; but I took my finger from the trigger, to lie watching the primeval elephant.

I didn't give John Mycroft more than a swift single thought, and certainly I had forgotten the bear we had been following. Of course Mycroft had known of this miracle, had been worried and jealous and fearful that I would come on it by accident. The act was done now and I felt that Mycroft would be reconciled to it. Then I forgot him entirely. I lay on the narrow moraine between the stiff bushes and filled my eyes and my heart—yes, and even, it seemed, my belly—with the shattering spectacle of the mammoth.

I passed from tree to tree along the edge of the wood, moving as an African elephant does, with a kind of ponderously graceful, drifting gait, like a weighty shadow. The gleam of its ivory against the green peat was bizarre and impossibly grand. To see it was to gaze down measureless corridors of the centuries and glimpse for a moment the golden youth of the mammalian world, when a hundred million giants such as this one had clashed their tusks from Spain to the Arctic Circle.

I did not know, I could not guess, why it was alive, where it had come from or where it had lived during the century or so of civilization in Alaska. Perhaps it had been here all along. Perhaps its remote forebears had crossed the land bridge from Asia and settled here in the valley, to peter out gradually in pride and loneliness. I did not theorize long or consciously. The existence of the beast was enough to satisfy me.

At last, the mammoth moved in among the trees and disappeared.

I sighed, shuddered from scalp to heel, wiped the clammy sweat from my face with numbed fingers and rolled on my side. John Mycroft was standing ten feet away, his rifle trained on my breast.

We remained so for a second or two, and then he lowered his rifle. "Well," he said, "that's that."

I sat up. "You were going to shoot me," I said.

He nodded, started to speak, and then threw up the weapon and fired twice. Astonished beyond measure, I had flung myself on my own gun and raised it before I realized that he had shot above my head. I rolled and got to my knees, and there was a mountain of tawny brown fur lunging toward me.

I contracted my body like a salmon attempting a waterfall, and heaved myself down the rocky slope of the moraine; somehow I kept hold of the rifle, even when my face smashed into the rubble and became all a fiery flame. Twisting over, I shot almost straight up as the brownie passed me, hitting it a maddening blow in the guts more by chance than design.

I turned from Mycroft, who was firing away methodically; and I put a slug into its chest.

We were like pygmies darting needles into a gorilla, but suddenly the huge bear halted, bloody slaver flying from its gaping jaws, it swayed, a monarch assassinated who could not realize the fact of his death. The head sank below the shoulders, the terrible incisors ground once, and the body that was now warm dead meat swung round and fell across the spine of ragged brush.

I stood, very shaky in the knees, and went up to John Mycroft. We looked at the vast hulk of the brown bear.

"Big old devil," Mycroft said. "Almost a record, I'd say. Never knew a brownie to charge on his hind legs," he added irrelevantly. "Queer—he must have been close to us all the time, and we never heard him or whiffed him. What a note!"

"You were going to shoot me," I said again, stupidly.

Without answering, he led me down to a stream of icy water, and began to wash the rock trash out of my face and clean off the blood. At last, he said, "Yes, I was."

The shock of the water had brought me to rationality. "I don't think you would've really. If you wanted your secret kept that badly, all you had to do was to let the brownie take two more steps—and I'd have been red rags."

"That was afterward. Don't get sen-

timental ideas. You're my friend, but in that one moment, with the hunter's soul shining in your eyes, I would have killed you." He frowned, probing gently at a cut with a wet handkerchief.

I meant you to see the mammoth today, Russ. Damn it, what good's a friend if you aren't sure you can trust him to the limit?"

"And you weren't sure about me."

"I wasn't sure about anyone but myself. Nobody ever is. I wanted to find out. And then, at the last second, when your finger was on the trigger, I realized I'd shoot you if I had to, to save him." His dark cheeks reddened. "Let's drop it. Are you thinking I ought to tell the world about him?"

"No," I said. "Oouch! Go easy."

"I'm a scientist," he said harshly, trying to justify a situation that needed no justification with me. "If two score of 'em came with their calipers and notebooks to pester the poor brute to death, they couldn't collect half the facts I've got on him. All they could do would be to make a vulgar display of him."

WE went up to the bear again and set about skinning it. After a little, Mycroft began to say something, and I interrupted him: "If you're going to give me a rigmorale about your glorious destiny as keeper of the last mammoth, you can sit on it. I know all the things you want to say. Here in this valley the final act of a titanic play is coming to its close, while everyone believes it ended in the mists of prehistory. *The sunset of the Mammoth!* You intend to watch it to its crashing finale, and to watch it alone. You want to live with this beast that by rights should be ten thousand years dead, to have a little of his lonely glory rub off on you. If the wish is selfish, it's at least sublimely selfish. In your place I'd do just what you're doing. So quit trying to explain yourself to me." I patted the gigantic head of the brownie. "We'll show this to Kirk and tell him it's what he saw." Then I asked, "Can I come back in the fall? Or do you still resent me?"

He made a harsh sound in his throat. "You've spoiled me for a hermit." Then, grinning, he reached out a hard brown hand. "Welcome to the brotherhood of shaggy-elephant keepers," he said.

We shook hands across the carcass of the bear, staring into each other's eyes.

Then our comfortable laughter rang out over the meadow and through the spruce woods, to die away in the distances of the secret valley that lies beyond the glittering range.





By WILLIAM O. DOUGLAS

# A Girl With a Basket

*In a tiny drama, played against squalor and poverty,  
a Supreme Court Justice glimpses the warm soul of India*

Supreme Court Justice Douglas has recently returned from two trips through the Middle East and India. The following incident is from his account of his travels in Strange Lands and Friendly People.

I HAD left New Delhi for the Himalayas. I was going as far as Bareilly by train and then by car to Ranikhet—an old British Army hill station located on a 6,000-foot ridge opposite a 120-mile stretch of snow-capped Himalayas. The train was slow; and it stopped at all the way stations. At every stop I swung open the door of my compartment, which, European style, was on the side of the train, and walked the platform.

The platforms were packed with people—Sikhs, Moslems, Hindus; soldiers, merchants, priests, porters, beggars, hawkers. Almost everyone was barefoot and dressed in loose white garments.

## Friendly Talk

I would ask not more than three people before I found one who spoke English. We would talk world affairs and Indian affairs—Korea, communism, Nehru, America, Pakistan, food, and every major topic the news of the day produced. In this way I was trying to get a feel of the pulse of the nation, checking opinion against official attitudes and reports.

The route lay through one of the richest of India's agricultural areas. This was the plain of the upper Ganges River, a thousand feet above sea level but tropical. The Ganges was brown with silt, swollen with flood waters, its overflow inundating thousands of acres of rice.

To the north were jungles—great expanses of grass higher than a man's head and unbroken except for an occasional clump of trees—the home of

tigers, elephants, pythons, and cobras.

Everywhere else there was flat land running to the horizon as in Indiana, but dotted here and there by the sacred banyan tree. Monkeys—some of them mothers with babies clinging to them and riding underneath—swung off trees at the stations looking for food. The villages we passed had walls made of mud mixed with water and cow dung. Their peaked roofs were thatched—bundles of grass tied to bamboo poles stretched across the rafters. That day the pumpkin vines that grew over them were in bloom, trailing streaks of yellow over drab walls.

## Basket Sellers

At one station my routine of talking with the natives was interrupted. As soon as I alighted, a group of young children gathered around me. They were selling baskets—hand-woven, reed baskets with simple designs and patterns. They held the baskets high, shouting words I did not know but conveying unmistakably their desire.

These were refugee children. When partition between India and Pakistan was decreed, hundreds of thousands of people pulled up their roots and changed their residences. Nine million people left Pakistan and came to India, driven by the fear of religious fanaticism.

They were poor people to start with; they were poorer as they began their long trek, for all they could carry was a bit of food and a few belongings. Soon they were out of food. A few days after they started, they began to fall by the wayside from the weakness of hunger, and died where they fell. The highways were so thickly lined with bodies that the vultures could not eat them. And so the corpses bloated and rotted in the sun, the smell of putrid flesh filling the valleys.

The children selling baskets were sons and daughters of these refugees. They or their parents or relatives had gathered in the cities, setting up stalls, manufacturing simple articles, trying to make a living in markets already overcrowded. They lived in cloth and grass lean-tos that lined the streets.

## Accustomed to Little

The peasants among these refugees had been accustomed to little all their lives, for the annual income of an agricultural family does not on the average exceed one hundred dollars a year. There is one meal a day—an onion, a piece of bread, a bowl of pulse (lentils) with milk, perhaps a bit of goat cheese. No tea, no coffee, no fats, no sweets, no meat.

One hundred dollars a year is less than two dollars a week, yet even that small amount is hard to earn by selling baskets to people too poor to buy them. That no doubt is the reason these little children descended on me like locusts. I, an American, was doubtless the most promising market they had seen.

I bought one tiny basket for a few annas, another fruit basket for a bit more, a beautiful wastepaper basket for a rupee, a lovely sewing basket for a rupee, a few fans for an anna or two apiece. My arms were filled and I had spent under fifty cents. The children pressed in, shouting their wares. I was a prisoner, completely surrounded, unable to move.

The most diligent, aggressive vendor was a beautiful girl of nine. She had a lovely basket with a handle; and she wanted a rupee and a half for it or

Reprinted by permission from *Strange Lands and Friendly People*, by William O. Douglas, published by Harper & Brothers, New York. Copyright, 1951, by William O. Douglas.



## About Justice Douglas

By Gerald W. Johnson

*Distinguished Newspaperman and Historian*

**C**ALAMITIES, numerous and heavy, have fallen upon William Orville Douglas in the course of his lively career—infantile paralysis, Nicholas Murray Butler\* and a horse, to name a few—but such is the quality of the man that none has flattened him permanently.

The horse came nearest to doing so. Two years ago, in the Cascades, Mr. Justice Douglas' mount fell on him.

Yet this accident played a part in persuading the victim that he should temporarily seek a change of scene. The journeyings that followed resulted in his new book *Strange Lands and Friendly People*. So even the horse was defeated. The blow he dealt Douglas simply produced a rebound in an unexpected direction.

This is characteristic of the Douglas record. He is the son of a Scotch Presbyterian home missionary. No Presbyterian manse is a house of luxury, and that of a home missionary is usually poorer, financially, than the average.

As a boy, William was touched briefly by the dread spectre of polio, and under the accepted rules should have emerged from the encounter an invalid. But he rebounded. What the illness actually did for him was to give him a lively and intelligent interest in physical activities. If not exactly an athlete, he is at least as much of an athlete as a man in his fifties has any business being.

Largely by his own efforts he financed his way through Whitman College, at Walla Walla, Washington, then took a job as a high school teacher to earn money for law school. His record at Columbia Law School was so good—he came out second in his class—that it won him a position as an assistant professor. Hardly a year had passed when the young assistant professor was rash enough to tangle with President Butler, that most formidable educator, and then to resign in protest, which normally should have finished his academic career. But a chance meeting with Robert M. Hutchins, then head of the Yale Law School, resulted in Douglas' swift translation to Yale.

In 1936 President Roosevelt appointed him to the Securities and Exchange Commission, and in 1939 to the Supreme Court. The country swarms with people who hate to see Douglas there. Some of them are die-hard conservatives who dislike his liberalism; but others, probably more numerous, are themselves liberals who delight in Justice Doug-



las' decisions, but who think he would be still more useful in the White House.

This is a matter of opinion, but one thing is certain—William O. Douglas has been, is and always will be interesting, wherever he is. It is true because he is interested in people. In life or in law he rarely feels bound by the rule which decrees that a question once decided is not to be re-examined.

At every convenient opportunity the Douglas family—the parents and daughter Mildred and son William—make for the high hills of the West, a tall country in which a tall man—Justice Douglas is just under six feet—can take delight.

To minds of a different cast it is an awesome, not to say awful country, where vast masses of stone loom threateningly over the midget world of men; but no doubt it harmonizes exactly with the mind of a man who sees neither folly nor impiety in accepting the challenge of every new height, in seeking forever some summit so lordly that from it the climber might reach up and snatch a star.

Reprinted by permission from Book-of-the-Month Club News.

\*President of Columbia University, 1902-1945.

about thirty cents. She was an earnest pleader. There were tears in her eyes. She pleaded and begged in tones that would wring any heart.

My arms were full. I had no room, let alone any need, for another basket. Balancing my baskets and fans on my left arm, I reached into my right coat pocket and got a handful of change—perhaps fifteen cents in all—which I deposited in the basket that the young girl held imploringly before me. I tried

to explain that I could not buy the basket but extended the gratuity as a substitute.

I realized at once what offense I had given. This child of nine, dressed in rags and on the edge of starvation, raised her chin, reached into the basket, and with all the pride and graciousness of a lady handed the money back to me. There was only one thing I could do. I bought the basket. She wiped her eyes, smiled, and dashed down the plat-

form, headed for some grass hut that would have at least thirty cents for food that night.

The people I saw in India—those in the villages as well as those in high office—have both pride and a lively sense of decency and citizenship. They also have a passion for independence. This beautiful child—born in squalor and poverty, uneducated in both grammar and manners—had given me a glimpse of the warm soul of India.



Illustration by Robert Kane

## The Tiger's Tail

By HAROLD COURLANDER

A Folk Story from Indonesia

A FARMER was coming home from his rice fields one evening. His mind wandered gently over thoughts of eating, sleeping, and playing his flute. As he walked along the trail he came to a pile of rocks. Protruding through a crack he saw a tail switching back and forth. It was a tiger's tail. It was very large.

The farmer was overcome with panic. He thought of running to the village. But then he realized the tiger was waiting for him to appear around the turn of the trail. So he dropped his sickle and seized the tiger's tail.

Reprinted by permission from *Kantchil's Lime Pit, and other stories from Indonesia*, by Harold Courlander, published by Harcourt Brace and Co. Copyright 1950 by Harcourt Brace and Co., Inc.

There was a struggle. The tiger tried to free himself. He pulled. The farmer pulled. They tugged back and forth. The tiger snarled and clawed. The farmer gasped and perspired, but he clung frantically to the tail.

While the desperate struggle was going on a monk came walking along the trail.

"Oh, Allah has sent you!" the farmer cried. "Take my sickle from the ground and kill this fierce tiger while I hold him!"

The holy man looked at him calmly and said:

"Ah, I cannot. It is against my principles to kill."

"How can you say such a thing!" the farmer said. "If I let go this tail, which sooner or later I must do, the angry

**The farmer of this fable has much more than a hungry tiger by the tail . . .**

animal will turn on me and kill me!"

"I am sorry, brother," the monk said. "But my religion won't permit me to kill any living creature."

"How can you argue this way?" the farmer cried. "If you don't help me you will be the cause of my death. Isn't the life of a man worth as much as the life of a tiger?"

The holy man listened thoughtfully and said calmly:

"All around us the things of the jungle kill each other, and for these things I am not responsible. I cannot take a life, it is written so."

The farmer felt his strength leaving him. The tiger's tail was slipping from his tired hands. At last he said:

"Oh, my holy, kind-hearted friend, if it is so written, it is so written! Do me then one favor. Hold this tiger's tail so that I may kill him!"

The monk looked into the sky and thought.

"Very well, there is nothing written that says I may not hold a tiger's tail."

So he came forward and took hold of the tail.

"Do you have it?" the farmer asked.

"Yes, I have it," the monk replied.

"Do you have it firmly?"

"Yes, I have it firmly."

The farmer released his hold. He wiped the sweat from his face. He picked up his sickle from the ground. He straightened his clothes and brushed the dust from his hands. Then he started toward the village.

The tiger renewed the tug of war with great energy. The monk clung frantically to the tail. They pulled back and forth desperately.

"Kill him, kill him quickly!" the monk shouted.

The farmer continued toward the village.

"Where are you going? I can't hold on much longer!" the monk cried in alarm. "Kill him with your sickle!"

The farmer turned quietly.

"Oh, holy and venerable man," he said. "It was good to listen to your sacred words and to hear what is written. I have been moved by your feeling for living things. I now believe as you do. And as it is written, I may not kill any living creature. If you hold on with patience, other men who do not have such high ideals as we do may soon come this way and destroy the tiger for you."

And the farmer bowed and continued on his way to the village.

# Poems by James Stephens

## *The Piper*

Shepherd! while the lambs do feed  
And you rest beneath a tree,  
Pipe upon an oaten reed  
Merrily and merrily.

Should it rain do not forbear—  
Rain comes from the happy sky—  
Tune us now a quiet air  
Til the shower passes by.

Back the sun will come in gold!  
Pipe away, my dear, until  
Evening brings the lambs to fold—  
You may weep then, if you will.

## *The Secret*

I was frightened, for a wind  
Crept along the grass to say  
Something that was in my mind  
Yesterday—

Something that I did not know  
Could be found out by the wind,  
I had buried it so low  
In my mind.

## *The Gombeen-Man\**

I put the sky into my pocket,  
And the sea into my locket,  
And into my breeches-band  
I put the land.

So I was trotting off to share,  
Among my comrades in the lair,  
Our profits, when a peeler† came  
And took my name.

And now I'm in the County Gaol!  
Will anybody be my bail?  
Will anybody be my bail  
And take me from the County Gaol?

\*A greedy grafter.  
†A policeman.

## *The Fifteen Acres*

I cling and swing  
On a branch, or sing  
Through the cool, clear hush of morning, O:  
Or fling my wing  
On the air, and bring  
To sleeper birds a warning, O;  
That the night's in flight,  
And the sun's in sight,  
And the dew is the grass adorning, O:  
And the green leaves swing  
As I sing, sing, sing,  
Up by the river,  
Down by the dell,  
To the little wee nest,  
Where the big tree fell,  
So early in the morning, O.

## ABOUT JAMES STEPHENS

Friends of the Irish poet and novelist, James Stephens, sometimes fondly likened him to a leprechaun. Like this Irish elf, Stephens was small in stature (under five feet) and had a warm wit and a spritely imagination.

He grew up on the streets of Dublin, barely saw the inside of a school, and educated himself by reading. He taught himself shorthand, secured an office job, and wrote poems and stories in his spare time. His name was made with the publication in 1912 of *The Crock of Gold*, a book you will enjoy reading, if you haven't already discovered it.

Stephens' delight in Irish folklore appears through many of his volumes. He died in 1950, at the age of 68.

Reprinted by permission from *Rocky Road to Dublin* by James Stephens, published by MacMillan Company, New York. Copyright, 1915, by the MacMillan Co.



Illustration by Eileen Coghlan from *The Emerald Ring*, by Sinead de Valera, published by Dodd, Mead, 1951.

## The Tall Tale

Ellen Brady tells this story with warm and sympathetic insight.

**T**HE EEL, within the glassy cylinder of his aquarium, was no doubt oblivious to the circle of bright-eyed little boys who crowded around to stare at him. But they shot one question after another at their teacher.

"Does he bite, Dr. Rowland?"

"Oh, sir, can eels wiggle on land as well as in water?"

"Of course not," said one boy. "Can't you see he's a fish?"

"But can't they ever go on land?"

Dr. Charles Rowland started to answer his students, but then paused, looking out the window, thinking.

He had been six years old when he learned that eels could progress on land as well as in water. "A bright-eyed, interested sort of little fella," his friend old John Chandler had called him. Certainly it was true that he had been fond of those hours spent exploring the slaty beaches with Old John.

That spring of his sixth year Stowe's Creek had changed its course in the first thaw. Where there had been a fork, two streams now ran almost parallel, meeting only just before they joined the bay. It was there, just after sunrise one Saturday morning, that he had seen them—a whole school of eels emerging from the brook on one side and slithering across the green grass to the other brook—regular sea-going eels, the kind that stole one's mackerel bait.

Later, when he had returned home for breakfast, his family had looked up in surprise at his excited expression.

"What's up?" his brother Edward inquired.

"Where have you been, Chippy?" asked Mrs. Rowland.

"Down at Stowe's Creek," said Charles, "and I saw hundreds of eels walking through the grass."

"You *what*?" exclaimed all the Rowlands together. Then Edward and Tom began to roar with laughter.

"He saw eels *walking* through the grass," gasped Edward.

"Me, I saw an elephant swimming in the bay," howled Tom.

"Now, boys," said Mr. Rowland.

And "Really, Chippy," said Mrs. Rowland.

Somehow, breakfast hadn't seemed important any more. Chippy scowled and pushed back his chair. "Mav I please be excused?"

"But you've hardly eaten anything!"

"That's all right. I can put some cake in my pocket," said Chippy.

"All right," said Mrs. Rowland, "but start back when you see the twelve-thirty ferryboat."

"Give the eels my love," Edward called after him.

So Charles went to find Old John.

He came upon Old John's son, Young John, mending his nets on the pier. Young John was about sixty years old, grey-haired, and deaf as a post.

"Morning, John," said Charles.

"Haah?" exclaimed Young John, and then, "Oh. How d'ye-do, young fella. Pleasant day, ain't it?"

"Do you know where I can find your father?" the boy asked.

"Haah?"

"WHERE'S YOUR FATHER?"

"Haah? Eh-yuh. Ye won't find him heah," said Young John. "Saw'r him in the shed, though."

"Thanks, John," Charles said. Then, deciding to take a chance, he added, "GUESS WHAT! I SAW ABOUT A HUNDRED EELS WIGGLING THROUGH THE GRASS THIS MORNING."

Young John stared and then began to laugh, and he laughed until Chippy, registering as much indignation as one can with the back of one's neck, had retreated all the way to the boatshed.

"Hunnerd eels," wheezed Young John after the retreating figure. "He saw'r a hunnerd eels."

Old John was caulking his dory when Chippy's small form blocked his light. Without even waiting for the old gentleman to look up, Chippy blurted, "Guess what, John. I saw a whole school of eels going through the grass this morning."

"Eh-yuh," assented Old John, looking up with a nod. "I 'spect it's just about the season for 'em. Hand me that caulk-in' iron, Chippy."

A great weight lifted from the boy's mind. With a sigh, he sat down on the edge of the dory. "I expect you've seen schools of eels on the land lots of times, John," he said.

"Not so often," said Old John, lighting his worn black pipe. "But it seems t'me every yeah or so they all go up to wheah they was hatched out and lay their eggs. Tain't nothin'll stop them, even land in the way, I've heard." Old John surveyed his caulking with a practiced eye. "Want to come out to help me put over a moorin' this mornin'?" he asked.

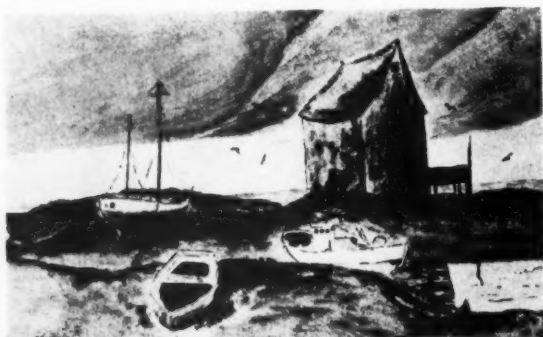
"Oh yes," Charles agreed. He was regarding the old man with his clear eyes. Then he said, "You know, John, everyone else gave me the laugh when I told them about the eels. You always say you never went to school, but I expect you're the smartest person I know. . . ."

• • •

Dr. Charles Rowland turned his attention back to his class. He wondered briefly if, for all his years of schooling, he had yet grown as wise in the ways of nature as Old John. Or as wise—he looked about at his chattering students—in the ways of boys.

Ellen C. Brady

Rogers H. S., Newport, R. I.  
Teacher, Mary J. Pierce



Opaque water color by Robert Plieth, Franklin School, Portland, Oregon, received national award for water color in 1951 Scholastic Art Awards.

Memories of your own first formal will come flooding back to you as you read this story by Anne Hall

### "Come Formal"

Gary Mason adjusted his tie for the fourth time and then stepped back from the mirror to get the full effect of the rented tuxedo. He glanced uneasily at the clock on his dresser.

Might as well admit it. He was nervous. But why? Hadn't he taken Liz skating, and to the movies, and to the party Janie Sanders had given? Yet this was different—a whole lot different—Gary thought.

"Gary, aren't you ready yet?" Mrs. Mason called from downstairs. "You want to pick Elizabeth up on time."

"I'm ready," he said. "I'm coming."

• • •

Elizabeth Brent's mother came into her daughter's bedroom carrying The Dress. "You'd better hurry and put this on, honey," she said.

"Oh, Mother, do you think I'll ever make it?" Elizabeth moaned. "I just have to look nice tonight, even if I never look nice again. Where's my lipstick? It was here on the dresser just a few minutes ago. Oh, what'll I do?"

Mrs. Brent walked over to the dresser. "Here it is, honey, behind Gary's picture," she said calmly.

"Now, how in the world did it get back there?" Liz exclaimed.

Mrs. Brent smiled. "I imagine you put it back there," she said. "I'll go downstairs now, and be on the lookout for Gary."

• • •

Gary pulled the car out of the driveway and ran the side window part way down to let in some air. He was hot. The collar of the tux was stiff. He looked at his watch, and his foot came down harder on the accelerator.

He let his mind wander to the night that lay ahead of him. This would be the first formal dance he had ever attended. Liz's first, too. He hoped he wouldn't mess up everything. If he could just dance better, he thought. "Stick to the step you know and everything will work out all right," his Dad had told him. But he was still unconvinced. Suppose Liz would be an expert dancer? He'd feel like a dunce. She might even laugh at him. He was getting hotter. He opened the window all the way down.

The door bell of the Brent's house looked like an evil eye staring him in the face, and he was almost afraid to push it. But this is silly, he thought. I have to pull myself together.

• • •

Inside the house, Liz was pacing the



"Self-portrait," ink drawing by Phyllis Clark, Cheltenham H. S., Elkins Park, Pa., won award, 1951 Scholastic Art Awards.

floor. "Why doesn't he come? Maybe he's stood me up." The horror of the thought swept over her.

"My dear," her father said, "since he is now just five minutes late, I see no cause to worry. Give the boy a chance."

The sound of the doorbell echoed through the house. It was a sharp jab, but to Elizabeth it was like the peal of joyous chimes. "There he is!" she sighed.

"Bet he's nervous," Mr. Brent said, winking at Mrs. Brent as she started toward the door.

"Wait a minute, Mother!" Liz exclaimed. "Wait until I get to the top of the stairs. 'Now,' she called softly from the top, 'I'll be walking nonchalantly down the stairs.'"

"I see," Mrs. Brent opened the door. "Won't you come in, Gary?"

"Oh—sure. Is Liz ready?" His voice trailed off as he saw her coming down the stairs.

"Hello, Gary," Liz said. Her voice was softer than he had ever heard it. Suddenly he felt like a stranger, but then she smiled and he felt better.

When they were finally in the car, Liz breathed a small sigh of relief. Gary glanced at her. Gee, she was sure looking pretty tonight, he thought. He'd have to tell her so, but somehow, he just didn't have the words right now.

They had driven in silence for awhile, when Liz suddenly spoke. "Gary," she began, "I—I suppose you're a wonderful dancer."

Gary shifted in his seat. "Oh, I wouldn't say that," he said hopelessly. He had been right. She must be a good dancer, or she wouldn't have said that. And when she found out.

"Well, I hope you're not too terrific," Liz was saying, "because I'm not too good. I mean I haven't danced an awful lot, and—well, I know I should have told you, but . . ."

"You don't—you aren't—you haven't?" Gary questioned wide-eyed. "Well, what do you know!"

• • •

The strains of "Stardust" were flowing sweetly through the large, festive ballroom.

"I love that song," Liz said.

"It's my favorite," said Gary, looking down at her. "Shall we dance?"

Liz nodded. Her eyes were bright, and she looked happy. Gary felt happy, too, and not very nervous now.

"Stardust" gave way to "Deep Purple," and Liz's filmy dress twirled about her ankles. They were dancing, and they were doing surprisingly well.

"You look beautiful tonight, Liz," Gary said. It seemed easy to tell her now.

Liz smiled. "You know, Gary," she said, "you're a marvelous dancer!"

**Anne Hall**

Ankeny (Iowa) H. S.  
Teacher. Bertha E. Teal

Much of the charm of this delicate poem lies in its power of suggestion. Let your imagination play on the images of the rose and the wind.

### The Rose

The little rose is dust, my dear;  
The brisk north wind is gone,  
That sang a song of silver words  
And cooled our hearts at dawn.  
And what is left to hope, my dear,  
And what is left to say?  
The little rose, the wind, and you  
Have gone so far away.

**Ernest Eto**

Laiehua H. S.  
Wahiawa, Oahu, Hawaii

### See Yourself in Print

● Have you a short story, poem, or essay, of which you're especially proud? Send it to the Young Voices Editor, Scholastic Magazines, 351 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y. Enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope if you wish your contribution returned. Material published is automatically considered for awards in the annual Scholastic Writing Awards and for honors in those areas where Regional Scholastic Writing awards are sponsored by local newspapers.





Charming ballerina Elaine Fifield dances a whimsical role in *The Prospect Before Us*, a comedy about a ballet company claimed by rival theatre managers.



## Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet

*We present a new British ballet company  
which is enchanting American audiences*



In *Coppelia*, a village youth (David Blair) discovers that his sweetheart (Svetlana Beriosova) is really a toy girl created by her father, village toymaker.

*The Nutcracker Suite*, a favorite classical ballet, is danced to the music of Tchaikovsky by Elaine Fifield (the Sugarplum Fairy) and partner David Blair.

LITERARY CAVALCADE



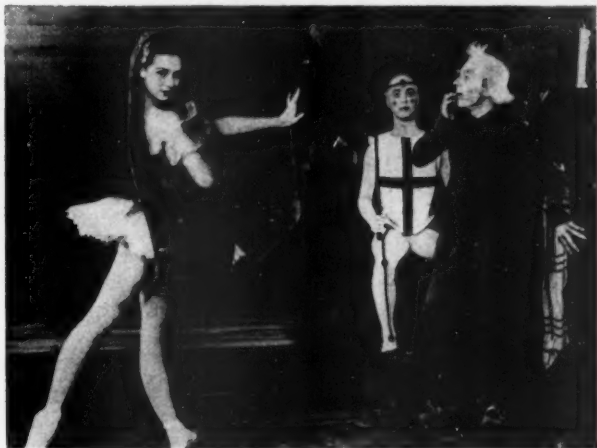
In Tchaikovsky's classic ballet *Swan Lake*, beautiful maidens are transformed by a magician into swans.

A NEW and vivacious British ballet corps has been dancing its way across the U. S.—and into the hearts of American audiences. The Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet crossed the ocean from England six months ago, a year after its sister ballet, Britain's famed Sadler's Wells Ballet, had proved so popular in the United States that its tickets became as difficult to come by as tickets to *South Pacific*. The newer company was organized in 1946 by Director Ninette de Valois of the Sadler's Wells.

Before closing its tour, the ballet will appear in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Columbus, Toledo, Cincinnati, Ohio; Indianapolis, Ind.; Troy, N. Y.; Providence, R. I.; Hartford, Conn.; Boston, Mass.; Syracuse, N. Y., New York City.



In *Coppelia*, the toy-maker (Stanley Holden) hovers anxiously over his daughter when she starts to dance.



In another scene from *Coppelia*, a real girl grows jealous of the toy girl, and pretends to become a toy herself.





*Lt. Merrick had almost forgotten that girls like Evie and homes like this still existed in the world*

# The Trespasser

By LAURENCE CRITCHELL

**A** YOUNG girl opened the door. She had the expression on her face of one who was in the house alone and he saw that she was ready to close the door quickly. He took off his hat. "My name is Merrick," he said. "I don't know whether you'll remember me—I was a friend of Steve's overseas."

The door was suddenly wide open. "Come in," she said.

He saw the brown wood table with the tasseled lamp, the old copies of travel magazines, the umbrella rack by the door. He saw the worn carpet on the stairs. And then he saw the girl. She had dark hair, almost black, and a pale light skin. She was thin for her height but she was pretty. She had Steve's eyes, he saw, and something of Steve's simplicity. She was trembling.

"I'm sorry," she said. "Would you go in there?" She gestured to the front room. "I—I—" She turned and fled.

He had forgotten there were homes

like this still left in the world. The front room had a bay window overlooking the garden. There was a rubber plant on one of the sills. Over the mantelpiece was a colored reproduction of a sailing ship. An upright piano stood against the wall. It was a house for people who never moved away, he thought, who sang hymns around the piano after supper and went on picnics in the summer. And yet a man who had lived in this house had died by a rice paddy in the Orient.

He had been thinking about this house ever since he left Korea. He hadn't wanted to come here. He had told himself that it was better if he stayed away—better for Steve's folks, that was. But something had made him come. He had done it to punish himself, perhaps. For it was hard enough to be alive when your best friend was dead, hard enough to know that you had been the cause of his death, but hard—impossible—to tell his family, "Your son gave his life for mine."

The girl came back into the room. He saw that she had been crying. "I'm

sorry," she said. "Please sit down. My mother and father are out taking a walk. They'll be back in just a few minutes."

"I wasn't sure I ought to come," he said. "I didn't want to make things more difficult."

She took a deep breath. "Well, of course you will," she said. "But I think we'd rather have it that way. You were with Steve when he died, weren't you?"

"Yes."

"We got your letter," she said. "It was very kind of you. And I know they'll want to talk to you." She went over and gazed out the window. "It's been very hard for them. They're old people." She controlled her voice with an effort. "May I get you something to eat? We had some cake for dessert—there's plenty left."

"Yes, I'd like a piece of cake," he said.

He watched her go back through the dark dining room to the kitchen. She was a nice girl, he thought. What in the world was it that made a girl "nice"—that made the difference between this

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girl and the girls he had met in Tokyo and Honolulu and San Francisco? A kind of simpleness of heart, perhaps. She probably sang in the church choir and played the piano. That was a way of life that he had lost. He didn't belong anywhere any more, only to the wars, to the world, to the earth.

"Your name is Evelyn—Evie—isn't it?" he said when she came back.

"Yes."

"Steve told me about you," he said, accepting the dish and the glass of milk. "Did you graduate from high school all right?"

"This June," she said.

There was a little silence. "Steve got the cake your mother sent," he said. "Three days before—"

"Mama will be so glad," she said. She was sitting upright in the chair, her hands clasped in her lap. "Was it fresh?"

"Fresh enough."

"We sealed it in paraffin, you know." She smiled at him and he saw that she was really quite lovely. "It all seemed so far away to us. Dad kept a war map and we tried to figure out where Steve might be."

"I know," he said.

"He was your assistant platoon leader, wasn't he? You were a first lieutenant?"

"Yes."

"How is it that you're home?"

How close that question was to the other question, the question that would make her hate him: How is it that you're alive? He told her about his leg, about the fragment of mortar and the infection that wouldn't heal. She listened intently to every word he said. He had never been listened to so intently. He had the queer feeling that she wanted to put her arms around him and cry.

"Would you like some more cake?" she said. "There's really plenty."

"No thanks. This is fine."

**I**N the silence he heard the ticking of the hall clock. "They're coming," she said, getting to her feet. "I'll turn on the lights. I'd like it to be as cheerful for them as possible."

He rose. "Steve talked of getting a graduation present for you," he said. "But I don't believe he got a chance to send one, did he?"

"No."

"Well, I brought it for you," he said, taking a small box from his pocket. "I'll be truthful—he didn't pick it out. I picked it out myself. I thought he'd want you to have it."

She stared at him. He saw the pale face and the gray-green eyes. And suddenly he found himself wishing with all

his heart that he didn't have to tell them what he had come to say.

Mr. Willits was a small, thin gray-haired man. His eyes were tiny and bright. The hand that he gave Merrick to shake was bony and the grip was weak but he stood upright and his walk was firm. Mrs. Willits had brown rather untidy hair, a snub nose and bunched-up cheeks. She was the first to realize who Merrick was and she embraced him.

"My dear boy!" she exclaimed. "Thank God! You were spared."

The girl turned to her father. "You remember Steve writing about Lieutenant Merrick," she said. "This is Lieutenant Merrick. He was Steve's platoon leader."

"Ah," said the old man. His mind worked slowly on the problem. "You were there. You were with him."

*It was night and the tent flaps were tied shut against the wind that blew down from Mongolia. There was a lantern on the table and a clipboard roster of the company. Steve had come in to have a little talk. He was a thin black-haired wiry young man with a narrow face and a high forehead. He was going to be a lawyer. "My father was a building contractor," he said. "Of course he doesn't work any more—he's getting pretty old. But he was always interested in things, always wanted to see the world. . . ." Steve's voice went on and on. The lantern flickered.*

"Yes, I was with him," said Merrick. "He told me a great deal about you and Mrs. Willits and Evie. He was a fine soldier. You can be proud of him. I was walking along your street tonight, looking at all these lighted windows, and I was thinking how many people were indebted to him who didn't know it." He flushed, feeling embarrassed. "I'm afraid that's pretty corny."

"Why, I don't think it's corny at all," said Mrs. Willits. "It's a very sweet thing to say."

"Steve got the chocolate cake, Mama," said the girl.

"Oh, I'm so glad," said the woman. "You know, when you're a mother—" she laughed a little—"you don't know what to do for a grown son. So you keep on doing the things you've always done."

*"Mama's all right," Steve said. "But she thinks I'm still a kid. Look at this now—chocolate cake." He licked his fingers and grinned. "It's good, though."*

"Well, you don't feel very big in combat," he said slowly. "High explosives are pretty humbling. And if it's any satisfaction to you to know, the cake was gone in ten minutes."

"Lieutenant Merrick brought me Steve's graduation present," said Evie

suddenly. She held out the unopened box.

"Why, that's wonderful!" said the woman. "Open it. Let's see what it is."

Shaking her head quickly, the girl put the box back in the pocket of her dress. "I don't want to open it now," she said.

Merrick knew what she wanted to do. She wanted to open it when she was alone in her room, like any other young girl.

"Where was he when he died?" said the old man suddenly.

In spite of himself, Merrick started a little. "At Chongchon," he said.

"Where's my map?" said the old man, starting to rise. "Where did you put my map?"

"I'll get it for you, Dad," said the girl.

"Chongchon," he said, fumbling with his spectacles.

"Right here," said Merrick, going around behind him to point. The entire family gathered at the back of the chair. He was acutely conscious of the young girl beside him. She was trembling again and her body gave off a faint warmth.

"Evelyn, did you offer Lieutenant Merrick some of the cake?"

"Yes, Mama."

**T**HERE was a little silence. The old man in the leather armchair came slowly back from Chongchon. "Where was he before?" he said. "Which towns?"

"You must start from the beginning," said the woman sitting down again. "That is, if you don't mind. It's been very hard for us not to know what kind of life he was leading."

Merrick settled back. He wanted to smoke but he didn't know whether he should. After the homelessness of so much wandering, he longed to be a part of this quiet place, to belong here, to be accepted. He saw the girl and the mother sitting upright in their chairs, devouring him with their eyes as if in that way they could be a little closer to the man who had died. He thought of what it must have been like in this house when the telegram came—the ring of the bell, the footsteps, those last few seconds of Steve's life as the telegram was opened and then Steve was dead—dead in Korea and dead here, in this house.

"We met on the plane going over," he began.

When he had told them everything he remembered except Steve's death, they sat in silence for a moment. Then the woman drew a deep breath. Like Evie, her hands were clasped in her lap.



The warmth had gone out of her eyes. There was a tightness around her lips. "You must tell us how he died," she said gently. "I realize it will be very hard for you. But we must know everything."

He straightened up slightly in the chair. He had been waiting for this moment ever since Steve's death, waiting for it and dreading it. All through the evening he had sensed the unasked question in their eyes—why was this man spared, and not our son? It was natural; they couldn't help but feel that way; there was too much mystery in it. And now he had to tell them the truth and the truth would make him their enemy. He was alive because their son was dead. . . .

"He died the way I wish I could have died," he said slowly. "He died for someone else."

"Who?" said the old man.

Merrick took a deep breath. "Me," he said.

The silence in the room was profound. No one moved, no one said a word. In the darkness beyond the door the hall clock ticked.

*They were on the road by the paddy field in the darkness when they heard a bugle. There had been sleet that day and the foxholes had inches of muddy water in them and then smelled awful. Joe Manzini had been complaining of a frozen foot. Then mortar shells began to come in. The firing was heavier than it had ever been and in a little while they were fighting for their lives. Each rush brought the enemy closer to the road.*

"Steve had a foxhole next to mine," he said in a toneless voice. "We'd started

to withdraw. We couldn't hold on where we were, you see, and we had to get out or we'd be cut off. The night was very dark—that was a good thing. Anyway, the men all got out—those who were alive. They got the wounded out with them. Steve and I were the last."

He could hear the ticking of the hall clock.

"I told Steve that I'd go ahead and he could follow. He didn't want to. He wanted to go first. I wouldn't let him. So I started out. I had to run for it. The next thing I knew he was ahead of me. Halfway across they opened fire. Steve was in front. He took the bullets. I fell over him." He took a deep breath. "They thought we were both dead."

There was a little silence. He sat with his hands clasped, his knuckles white. "I don't know whether I can explain this," he said quietly, "but when Steve was hit I thought it was me. When I fell over him, I didn't know which of us was dead. It was as if in that moment we were one person. And when I found that I was alive—I didn't want to be alive. I was living because of him. And I would rather that he . . ."

He couldn't go on.

The silence prolonged itself. No one moved.

Merrick felt a great sense of loneliness. He was not to blame for Steve's death. And yet in some way that he didn't understand he was responsible—responsible because he was alive. And now there was nothing left for him to do but to go, out the door and into the street and back to his world. He picked up his hat and went quietly into the hall.

For just a moment he hesitated, listening to the silence of the house.

"Don't go," said the girl's voice behind him.

He was startled. He turned.

"Please," she said, coming up to him. "You'll make my parents very unhappy."

"I've done that already," he said.

"Give them a moment," she begged. "Just a moment."

Neither of them knew what to say. They gazed at each other in silence. Then all at once the girl took the package out of her pocket, unwrapped it and held the gift in her hand. It was a silver bracelet.

"I—I—" she said. And then she was crying in his arms.

That moment they heard Mrs. Willits' voice from the front room. "Lieutenant? Evie, is he still here?"

The girl dashed the tears out of her eyes. "You see?" she whispered fiercely. "Come on." And taking his hand she led him back into the room.

Mrs. Willits had opened the piano seat and was looking through the music. "Evie always played the piano for us after supper," she said. "The children sang a hymn. I'm sure it will seem very foolish and old-fashioned to you. But I thought perhaps—" She flattened the music to the stand. "Do you know this hymn, Lieutenant?"

He stared at the page of music. "Yes. I know that hymn," he said.

The last light had gone from the sky. Mrs. Willits turned on a lamp beside the piano and smoothed the music open. "This was Stephen's favorite hymn," she said. "You stand right here—that's where he always stood. That's right."

How could they do this, he thought, how could they?

They were all about the piano now, he and Mrs. Willits and the old man. Evelyn struck the first chords. He saw the bracelet on her wrist, the faded sheets of music, the lithograph of the sailing ship and the m'ber plant. Then, together, he and the girl began to sing:

*On is doing in the west,*

*Heaven is touching earth with rest—*

How could they do this, how could they?

*Wait and worship, while the night  
Sets her evening lamps alight*

The mother's hand rested on his arm. He saw the girl glance at him. And then, the tears running down his cheeks, he heard his voice again, his own and the girl's, there in that warm old-fashioned room, there at the end of the earth. . . .

*Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts,  
Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory*  
Steve had come home.



#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Believe it or not, but Laurence Critchell received his high school diploma two years ago at the age of 34. Before he snagged the coveted sheepskin he had been a reporter,

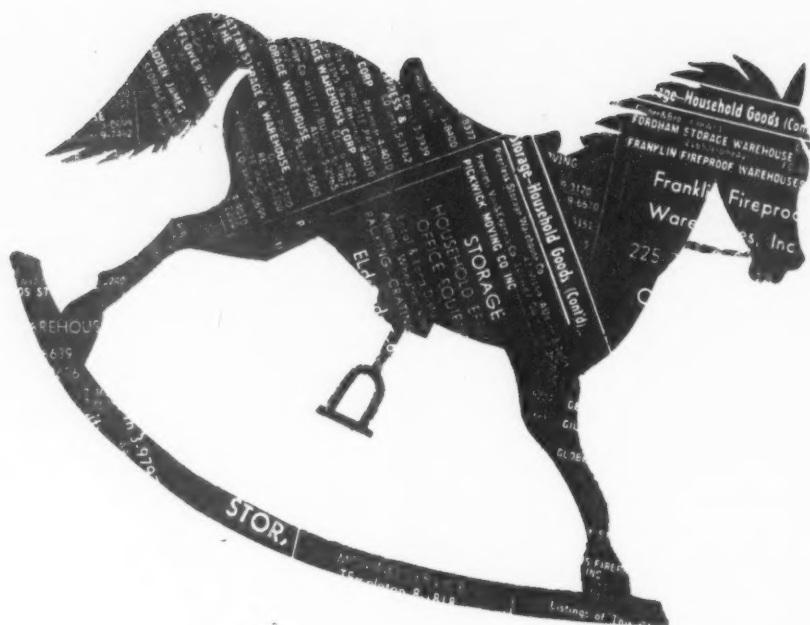
a writer, an Army captain, and the winner of a 1945 O. Henry Memorial Award for a short story. But let Mr. Critchell tell his own yarn:

"I was born in Chicago, Ill., in 1916, and grew up in New York. I attended the Browning School in New York up to the third year of high school. It was 1934 then and times were bad, so I went to work—at International News for \$15 a week. I became a reporter in 1938 and a magazine editor in 1939. Then I was drafted into the army as a private, commissioned a lieutenant, and

went with the 101st Airborne as a parachutist. I returned and subsequently became chief of the editorial division in General MacArthur's Headquarters in Tokyo.

"These 16 years I went without a diploma. Then when I was over in Japan, the Army had AEP (Army Education Program) facilities, so I took a chance and took the tests. I had to strangle my pride, because most of the fellows who were taking their tests were privates and I was a captain. But they seemed to think it was entirely natural—I can't imagine why. When my diploma came through from Browning School, we had a party at Headquarters to celebrate it. I'm sure I was as proud as I've ever been. And so was the Headmaster, evidently. He gave it to me in absentia at graduation exercises, with a little talk to go along with it. You see, he was my old English teacher."

Mr. Critchell is now back in the States, an editor for *Steelways Magazine*, and a free lance short story writer.



# THE ROCKING HORSE

**A Television Play by Doris Halman**

**It was the last thing Corky expected to find in the dusky warehouse, but there it was—an important link with his past**

**Characters**

BILL CORCORAN, warehouse employee  
JOHN McELROY, warehouse supt.  
JANE CORCORAN, Bill's wife  
MRS. ALEX GRAYSON  
YOUNG MATRON

*Sound of man's heavy footsteps as fade in to close up of an office door, with ground glass panel lettered:*

*New England Storage Warehouse  
Superintendent—J. McElroy*

*Close up of Corky's hand knocking on door, then camera pulls back to show Corky opening the door and looking into the office. McElroy is seated at desk, reading a letter. He is in his late fifties, authoritative, pleasant. He looks up as Corky enters.*

CORKY: You busy, Mac, or can I come in?

McELROY: Oh, hello, Corky, come ahead. I wanted to see you anyway, before you went home.

CORKY: Yeah, what for?

McELROY: I've got a rush job for you. Hope you're finished with Martin, because I need you for this one.

CORKY: What is it?

McELROY: Woman . . . a Mrs. Alexander Grayson . . . comin' from New York tomorrow at two p.m. to make final disposal of her household effects. . . .

CORKY: I didn't know we had stuff here name of Grayson. . . .

McELROY: That's because it's been stored for twenty-five years, in a couple of rooms upstairs—247 and 248.

CORKY: Oh, yeah! They haven't been opened up since I came to work here!

McELROY: It's a short order, Corky. Can you handle it?

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CORKY: Why not? I'll be in around seven-thirty.

McELROY: Swell, thanks.

*(Phone rings on McElroy's desk.)*

McELROY: Hello . . . that's right . . . this is the superintendent speakin'. . . . Well, s'pose you drop in sometime tomorrow. . . . Okay, Mrs. Oxford, I'll be here. G'bye.

CORKY: Here we go again, huh?

McELROY: Yeah. That's the start. Some woman wants to store her goods for just a little while, and the other one—the Grayson woman—wants to get rid of her stuff twenty-five years later.

CORKY: Yeah. And what do you bet, when she comes and looks at the junk she has'n't seen so long, she starts cryin' as if it meant somethin' to her!

McELROY: Well, it would, Corky, wouldn't it?

CORKY: Why? Who stuck it in here to rot?

McELROY: Well, p'raps she couldn't. . . .

CORKY: Don't give me that stuff! Anybody wants to, can, unless he dies or goes broke.

McELROY: Why, Corky. . . .

CORKY: Why, Corky, what?

McELROY: I didn't know you felt that way.

CORKY *(rises and crosses around desk)*: I don't have to show everything I feel, do I? But the truth is, Mac, if you want to know it, people who dump their belongin's make me sick!

McELROY: Hold your horses, boy. Why get all lathered up?

CORKY: I got plenty reason. . . .

McELROY: What reason?

CORKY: Oh, nothin' . . . don't know why I sounded off like that . . . see you tomorrow.

*(Cut to Corky's house. Corky comes in from the nursery, closing door softly. Voice of his wife, Jane, calling.)*

JANE: Corky . . . Corky, where are you?

CORKY: I'm right here, Jane, I'm comin'.

JANE *(entering room)*: Oh, I didn't know you were in the nursery. . . .

CORKY *(crossing to her)*: I just went in to take a look at Tommy.

JANE: Another one?

CORKY: Well, I like him, but I didn't wake him up or anything, Jane. He's okay. I just stood there, and in my mind I made him a couple of promises.

JANE: What promises?

CORKY *(sits and pulls her into his lap)*: Let's sit down and I'll tell you. *(He kisses her.)*

JANE: Now, Mr. Corcoran!

CORKY: Okay. Well, I promised him not to put his crib in storage tomorrow.

JANE *(head on his shoulder)*: You did? I'm sure he was very pleased!

CORKY: Yeah, he was. He thanked me.

JANE: Did he thank you for the other promise, too?

CORKY: He will. And how!

JANE: What is it?

CORKY: A rockin' horse for his birthday.

JANE *(head up)*: A rocking horse!

CORKY: Yeah, what's wrong about that?

JANE: Why, Bill Corcoran! For a baby two years old!

CORKY: That's not old enough still, huh?

JANE: Of course not, dear, he'd just fall off the horse and hurt himself! . . . Corky, what do you mean "still"?

CORKY: Oh, why, nothin'. Only I've been kind of waitin' to give him one, and I thought . . . Never mind, Jane. It's okay. I can wait till he's three, huh?

JANE: You've been waiting to get Tommy a rocking horse?

CORKY: Yeah, forget it. . . .

JANE: No. I want to hear about it, Corky. You never said anything about it before.

CORKY: Well, I told you. I was waitin' for him to be old enough!

JANE: Yes, but . . . if it was in your mind. . . . How long has it been in your mind?

CORKY: I guess since he was born.

JANE: Oh, Corky, then it meant something very important, didn't it, dear? Will you tell me what?

CORKY: You'd just laugh.

JANE: No, I wouldn't. Try me.

CORKY: Okay. I want Tommy to have a rockin' horse because I had one and I loved it better'n anything in the world, and I wasn't so old either, Jane. I was only four when I went to the orphanage, and I had him before that. . . .

JANE: Before. . . . But, Corky, I thought you didn't remember anything before the orphanage!

CORKY: I didn't anything else. Just Wag. "Wag" was his name. The horse. *(Rises and crosses room.)* I don't remember my name, but that was his, Jane. . . . And I know what Wag looked like, too. He was big and white, prancin' and gallopin' with his mane flyin' and his tail. . . . and he had a saddle on his back, with a red blanket underneath it, and on the blanket, see, in gold letters, there it was. . . . the name "Wag" . . . And I used to ride him every place a little kid wants to go. On the wind,

see, I thought I did, Jane . . . You laughin'?

JANE: Turn around and see if I am.

CORKY (turns to look at her): Thanks. It sounds crazy, but that's how it was . . . Wag and me ridin' places on the wind . . . where I wanted to go. And so, one day I was in the orphanage without my mother, and I wanted her. I thought Wag would come and take me to her on his back, because he always had, see, when I wanted . . . ?

JANE: Yes, dear. Yes, Corky.

CORKY: But he didn't come. I kept lookin' for him, but he didn't, and when he didn't I cried myself to sleep nights. And then I'd have the dream, always the same dream, Jane, about Wag . . .

JANE: Did he come in the dream?

CORKY: Yeah, gallopin'. Up to my bed. With his white mane streamin' out behind him, to take me to my mother, only he never did.

JANE: But you didn't forget him . . .

CORKY: Uh-uh. Never. He was my friend. (Sits) Even after the Corcorans took me, and I was seven then, and I'd been told my . . . my mother'd gone away and left me . . . for good . . . I still kind of . . . expected Wag to come some day . . . (Puts his arm around her) because I was lonesome, I guess. The Corcorans were awful good to me, Jane, but they were old folks that didn't know what to do about a little kid . . . I'm a grown man, now, with a boy of my own, Jane, but once in a while Wag comes gallopin' to me in that old crazy dream. Silly, huh?

JANE: I don't think so. And I think the nicest thing in the world to give Tommy is a rocking horse!

CORKY: Oh, now, lookit, just because I . . .

JANE: But I do, Corky! Only not a great big one like Wag, dear . . . a little one for a little bit of a boy . . . that it won't hurt him to fall off of?

CORKY: Yeah. A little one. Thanks.

JANE: And I think you're the person to pick it out for him, Corky, so will you?

CORKY: If you want me to. A little white one, huh?

JANE: Yes. You could go down to the stores tomorrow in your lunch hour.

CORKY: I got a rush job on tomorrow at the warehouse, and I may have to skip my lunch hour! A little white one, eh?

(Fade out and in to warehouse corridor outside room 247. McElroy comes down corridor to 247.)

McELROY (calls): Anybody here?

CORKY (coming out of door): Yeah. That you, Mac?

(Corky enters from 247, with sewing machine which he brings out and sets down in the nearest open space. Takes

big rag from overalls pocket, starts wiping dust off machine.)

CORKY: I'm almost through.

McELROY: That's fine, Corky. Where's Dan?

CORKY: Quit for lunch.

McELROY: You had lunch?

CORKY: I'll grab some in a minute, Mac. There's only a bunch of little stuff left in there. (Reentering room) One more trip, and I'll have it all out.

McELROY: I'll help you.

CORKY (laughs): No, don't bother. Thanks just the same. It's only a couple of screens, propped up against something or other. (Corky, with both hands, takes hold of screens, starts to move them.) I don't need any help with . . .

(He has the screens away from the corner now, and behind them is a huge, once very expensive but now dust-covered and battered, white rocking horse. The letters, suddenly wiped clean, are obviously initials: W. A. G. Corky, standing transfixed, whispers.) Wag . . .

McELROY (appears in doorway): What's the matter, Corky?

CORKY: Huh? Oh. Nothin', Mac, nothin'.

McELROY: Well, what are you doing? What's keepin' you?

CORKY: Nothin', I said! I been workin' since before eight this mornin', I can stop to get my breath, can't I? I can get tired, can't I?

McELROY: Sure, sure, Corky. Keep your shirt on, I only asked. And give me those screens . . .

(McElroy tries to take screens from Corky, who resists, still not daring to turn and face him.)

CORKY: No, I'm sorry, Mac. I'm okay, I'll . . .

McELROY: Give 'em to me, Corky!

CORKY: Well . . . okay . . .

(Corky yields the screens. He has to turn, and McElroy sees his face.)

McELROY: You're sick, boy. Why didn't you tell me?

CORKY: I'm not sick . . .

McELROY: Don't kid me, you look like death. You been overworkin', Corky. You better knock off and go home!

CORKY: Home? Now? Not a chance. I want . . . I got to be here this afternoon when this . . . this Mrs. Grayson comes.

McELROY: I'll take care of her, myself . . .

CORKY: No, you won't, Mac. It's my job, and I want to stay on it. I want to get a good look at a woman who . . . who put everythin' she had away from her in cold storage for twenty-five years . . . like that rocking horse.

McELROY: Darned expensive one, too! Red and gold doodads all over it, and even the kid's initials!

CORKY: Yeah! Sure it's initials, isn't it—"G" for Grayson. But a little bit of a kid mightn't know that, Mac. I bet if my Tommy saw it, he'd think it was the horse's name, huh? Wag? And the grownups wouldn't let him know the difference, because they'd think it was cute and funny . . . Wag . . . so they'd let him . . .

McELROY: If it's a joke, it's beyond me. Look, Corky, you're so tired you're talkin' half out of your head.

CORKY: I'll be okay, Mac! Let me stay on the job. Soon's I grab me a bite to eat, I'll feel swell.

McELROY: Then the sooner you grab it, the better, Corky, so come on. I'll take these, and you bring the horse . . .

(McElroy goes out with the screens.)

CORKY: Yeah, sure . . . Thanks, Mac, I'm comin'.

(Corky turns to Wag. Lifts him under one arm, starts slowly with him across the floor of 247. A free fist comes up to take a gentle swipe at the draggled mane, and his voice is very low and filled with a terrible bitterness.)

CORKY: Okay, Wag, giddap, take me to my mother!

(Fade out and in to McElroy's office. McElroy is seated behind the desk. Corky stares at file cabinet.)

McELROY: You all right now, Corky? You still look awful pale around the gills to me.

CORKY: Oh, for Pete's sake, Mac. Quit worryin', will you?

(The shadow of a tall woman falls across the ground glass. Corky stops short. McElroy follows his glance. Knock on door.)

McELROY (rises): Come in.

(Mrs. Alexander Grayson opens door. Mrs. Grayson stands in the doorway for a moment looking from one man to the other.)

MRS. GRAYSON: Superintendent McElroy?

McELROY: That's right. And you're Mrs. Grayson.

MRS. GRAYSON: Yes.

McELROY: We've got your things ready for you. This is Bill Corcoran, who'll go upstairs with you and help you.

MRS. GRAYSON (impatiently): If . . . Mr. Corcoran will just show me the way, I shan't need any more help.

McELROY: Oh, but you will need help, Mrs. Grayson! To move the things around, and to make a list of what you want done . . .

MRS. GRAYSON: When I finish looking them over, I'll come and tell you.

McELROY: I'm sorry. But it's a rule of the warehouse to have a man in attendance while a customer's goods are out in the open.

MRS. GRAYSON: Oh, I see. Very well,



Mr. McElroy, but I should have preferred being left alone.

McELROY: Corky won't bother you...

CORKY: I wouldn't think of it.

MRS. GRAYSON: I should like to start at once, so that I may finish as soon as possible. I... don't suppose that will be today?

McELROY: You better count on closer to a week.

MRS. GRAYSON: A week! I took the hotel room for one night only, Mr. McElroy, and I have no other place to go...

McELROY (exchanging glance with Corky): Well, Corky, save Mrs. Grayson all the time you can. Huh?

CORKY: Okay, Mr. McElroy. If you want to come with me, Mrs. Grayson, your stuff's up on the second floor...

MRS. GRAYSON: Thank you.

(McElroy follows them to door. Pauses thoughtfully, turns back to desk.)

Cut to corridor as Mrs. Grayson and Corky walk down it toward pile of contents from room 247.)

CORKY: This is it, Mrs. Grayson.

MRS. GRAYSON: Yes, I... just at first. It's... hard... to recognize... anything...

CORKY: Why not, after twenty-five years? Nobody'd know what they got rid of that long ago.

MRS. GRAYSON: I didn't get rid of it, Mr. Corcoran. And I shall know it in a moment. I only meant that with everything piled up indiscriminately... (She breaks off.)

(Mrs. Grayson suddenly sees a tall slender vase of tarnished silver, which stands with other bric-a-brac atop a chest of drawers at the head of the aisle. Mrs. Grayson takes a step toward it, half reaches up her arm to touch it, lets arm fall as Corky speaks.)

CORKY: Recognize somethin'?

MRS. GRAYSON: Yes, Mr. Corcoran...

CORKY: What?

MRS. GRAYSON: I understand the warehouse rule, but... since I myself am here to protect my property, would you please leave me just for a hour?

CORKY: Sorry, I can't. You go ahead and look around, and decide what you want to keep...

MRS. GRAYSON: I shall keep nothing, Mr. Corcoran. I'm here to dispose of my goods.

CORKY: Okay. Then decide what you want destroyed, and what you want put up for sale, and I'll make a list and move the stuff into separate piles.

MRS. GRAYSON: The "stuff"? Yes.

CORKY (crossing behind her to trunks): Want to get the trunks out of the way first? A lot of people do, because I guess it's the toughest part of the job, lookin' over what's inside. You got the keys, Mrs. Grayson?

MRS. GRAYSON: Yes...

CORKY: Okay, then you want me to move...

MRS. GRAYSON: No, No!

CORKY: But you can't unpack 'em where...

MRS. GRAYSON: I shall not unpack the trunks, Mr. Corcoran. I shall have them destroyed just... as they are now.

CORKY: Okay, then I'll shove 'em out of...

MRS. GRAYSON: Don't touch those trunks!

CORKY: But lookit, Mrs. Grayson...

MRS. GRAYSON: Please, leave me alone!

(Sound of footsteps coming along the corridor. McElroy comes along with the young matron, Mrs. Brown.)

McELROY: Now, along here on this floor, Mrs. Brown, are the private rooms. (Pausing near Corky) Oh, excuse me a minute. How's it going, Corky?

(Mrs. Brown wanders on, looking at things.)

CORKY: Okay.

McELROY: Mrs. Grayson, you gettin' along all...

CORKY: She doesn't want to be disturbed, Mac.

McELROY: Oh... all right. Sure, Corky. Well, then, Mrs. Brown, I'm sorry I kept you waiting...

MRS. BROWN: I didn't mind. I'm interested, Mr. McElroy. Is this furniture being stored, too?

McELROY: No, it's... goin' out. Shall we...

MRS. BROWN: Looks like it's been here a long time.

McELROY: Quite a while. If you'll come...

MRS. BROWN: Oh, really? Mine won't be here for "quite a while," I can tell you! It's bad for things to leave them in storage, isn't it? Why, just look at these things. They...

MRS. GRAYSON: Mr. McElroy, if you don't mind.

MRS. BROWN: Oh! I'm sorry, I didn't realize anyone was... Excuse me. Do let's go, Mr. McElroy...

(Footsteps gradually fade away.)

MRS. GRAYSON: Mr. Corcoran...

CORKY: Yeah?

MRS. GRAYSON: I think if you'll kindly come here, I can at least make a start.

CORKY (crossing to her, and taking pad and pencil from his overalls pocket, ready to list her instructions): Okay.

MRS. GRAYSON: There are some things, I find, of no value now to anyone but myself. I... wish those things destroyed. The trunks...

CORKY: Trunks...

MRS. GRAYSON: And the family portraits.

CORKY: Sure. If you don't want 'em,

Mrs. Grayson, I guess nobody else would anyway.

MRS. GRAYSON: I don't want them. I suppose you think that quite heartless.

CORKY: Uh-uh, I expected it. Folks always dump out their relatives first thing... unless the pictures are worth money. What next?

MRS. GRAYSON: That... should be enough for a start.

CORKY: Yeah, sure. If you don't mind me movin' those...

MRS. GRAYSON: You may move them.

CORKY: Okay.

(Mrs. Grayson sees Wag)

CORKY (continuing): I'll put these in 248... (Exits)

(Mrs. Grayson, her cane forgotten, gets up, and with slow stumbling steps starts for 'Wag. Involuntary moan. Corky stops in his tracks, waits, watching the rocking horse. Mrs. Grayson reaches Wag, puts out a shaking hand to the rotted leather bridle. The bridle breaks in her hand. She drops it, her face working. She moves into the room, abreast of Wag where she can see the three tarnished gold initials. They make her clutch at the horse for support. Wag begins to rock. Mrs. Grayson is torn then with uncontrollable sobs. Corky starts impulsively to go to her, then brakes himself sternly and steps back, his foot striking blindly against one of the heavy frames. Mrs. Grayson hears, looks and sees Corky lurking behind the furniture, watching her. Sudden anger checks her tears.)

MRS. GRAYSON: You... obey the rules, don't you? Even to the point of spying on me?

CORKY: Look, I wasn't...

MRS. GRAYSON: Yes, you were. On the most personal grief a woman can feel, but that means nothing to you...

CORKY (tight lipped): Okay! Only how did I know you felt that way about Wag...

MRS. GRAYSON: Did you say Wag?

CORKY: Sure I did! That's his name, isn't it? Right there on his blanket? (Sound of hurrying heavy footsteps approaching, and fading.)

MRS. GRAYSON: To people who can read, Mr. Corcoran, those letters are initials—William Alexander Grayson.

CORKY: Okay, so I can't read, and I was wrong about the name, and...

MRS. GRAYSON: I shouldn't have argued with you about the horse's name. You were quite right. His name was Wag. He was named by a little boy just learning his letters. My little boy.

CORKY: You mus've loved your little boy an awful lot.

MRS. GRAYSON: Does that concern you?

CORKY: Only thing concerns me, Mrs. Grayson, is gettin' this job done.

MRS. GRAYSON: Yes, of course. Then we'll get it done, shall we? And this time I shall try to be more efficient. Come, please! (*Crosses to vase*)

CORKY: Okay.

MRS. GRAYSON: Now, Mr. Corcoran, we'll go back to the beginning. Please hand me the first thing I recognized. The silver vase.

CORKY (*gets vase*): Okay. (*Gives vase to her*)

MRS. GRAYSON (*stands very still, not looking at Corky but at the vase, turning it in her gnarled hands*): It's a beautiful vase. My young husband brought it to me. He bought it . . . filled with roses because I told him the night before that . . . we were going to have a child. We were both so glad . . . (*Still without looking at Corky, she hands him the vase*). Sell the vase, Mr. Corcoran. It will bring in a few dollars. (*Corky takes vase*). Now this, Mr. Corcoran. (*Pointing to trunk*) It can be sold, I think, to someone who would never know that one day a policeman stood in front of it, while he faced a young wife whose four-year-old son hid behind her skirt, and told her . . . that her husband had just been killed by a careless driver in the street.

CORKY: Yeah . . .

(*Again Mrs. Grayson goes quickly on, stops at the desk*.)

MRS. GRAYSON: Sell it.

CORKY (*comes to her this time without being told*): Okay.

MRS. GRAYSON: Are you making notes on your list?

CORKY: No, I . . . I can remember. MRS. GRAYSON: Can you? So can I. To the day I die, I shall remember sitting down at this desk, my husband's desk, after his funeral. (*She lifts the lid*). And going through all those pigeon-holes one by one, 'till I learned . . . Learned that where there had seemed so much money, there was none, and no family to turn to either . . .

CORKY: Yeah? Well, other women had it happen and went to work . . . for their kids. . . .

MRS. GRAYSON: Do you see that little drawer in the middle under the pigeon-holes?

CORKY: Yeah.

MRS. GRAYSON: There was a map in it. A map of South Africa. When I saw it, I remembered my husband had holdings there—extensive holdings in a developing company—that he often said would make us rich. For my child, Mr. Corcoran, I took all the money I had and went to South Africa to realize on those holdings . . .

CORKY (*low*): And forgot to come back?

MRS. GRAYSON: I stored my furniture, and I placed Billy in a good foundling home. Only for a little while, six months at most . . . but you see . . . when I reached South Africa, there had been a swindle, Mr. Corcoran. All the holdings were gone. There was nothing. And my money was gone too.

CORKY: Yeah.

MRS. GRAYSON: You say other women in my predicament go to work, Mr. Corcoran. What do you think I did in South Africa, trying to earn enough money to get home? I was a waitress, I washed other people's clothes, anything, I had to get home. I saved pennies, I starved. And then I fell ill, and I was ill for a long time in a charity hospital. And when I was on my feet again, they . . . told me that I hadn't too many years to live. They were wrong, of course, about the years, but I didn't know that, Mr. Corcoran, and so, for Billy's sake—he was seven then, and he needed the home I couldn't give him—so I wrote, authorizing his adoption. I begged them to find kind people, Mr. Corcoran, and a few months later they wrote back and said they had. They didn't tell names, of course, they never do . . . I . . . Oh, dear me, I'm talking with a

### About the Author

The teacher in her senior English class at Brookline (Mass.) H.S. was the person who influenced Doris Halman to become a dramatist.

"In fact," she says, "I graduated from high school feeling that I was the best writer in the world—and had to be taken down. This took place in the general English class for freshmen at Radcliffe College. For a whole year I was in despair. I nearly went crazy. I couldn't write anything that pleased the professor. Then on the postcard sent to our homes to announce our final exam grades, I received an enormous 'A' and the remark from the professor 'At last.' He taught me a valuable lesson—that writing isn't so easy, and that you have to try hard really to do anything."

Miss Halman was launched on her career when a one-act play she wrote a year after she was graduated from college was produced by the Harvard and Radcliffe Drama Workshop. It was later published in a number of play anthologies, including her own, *Set the Stage for Eight*.

In the next few years she acted, wrote, and landed a job in New York City as a reader in RKO's movie script department.

She is now a free lance writer for radio and TV.

job to do! (*Rises and crosses to Wag.*)

CORKY: Wait a minute, there's more, after . . .

MRS. GRAYSON: No. There isn't more after that, Mr. Corcoran. After that nothing happened. To me, or to anyone else. Now . . .

(*She has reached Wag. She turns to look back at Corky, speaking quietly*.) I shall ask you for the last time to come here, please . . .

CORKY (*crosses to her*): Okay.

MRS. GRAYSON: And we shall dispose of Wag. Wag. Because of him I paid storage on all this for twenty-six years, rather than part with him. How very silly. I look at him now, and I see an old, battered, worn-out rocking horse nobody would want or use or love. Destroy Wag, Mr. Corcoran!

CORKY: That's . . . your last word on him? You're sure?

MRS. GRAYSON: I'm quite sure.

CORKY: Okay, . . . but then I guess, instead of destroyin' him, I'll . . . take him home to my kid. I got a nice kid, Mrs. Grayson. He'll be two pretty soon.

MRS. GRAYSON: Really, Mr. Corcoran? You must love him very much.

CORKY: Yeah . . . I guess anybody'd love their kid a lot, huh? I got a picture of him, Mrs. Grayson, like to see it? (*Corky fishes wallet from overalls pocket, extracts snapshot and holds it out to her. Mrs. Grayson comes close to take it, her hand trembling.*)

MRS. GRAYSON: Why, he . . . (*Sternly disciplines the giveaway voice*) He looks very much like you, Mr. Corcoran. (*She gives back the snapshot.*)

CORKY: Yeah? (*Eagerly, then catches himself*) That's what everybody says.

MRS. GRAYSON (*After a pause*): Mr. Corcoran, a little while ago, when we were talking about . . . about . . . about Wag . . .

CORKY (*interrupting*): Look, you've had enough of this for one day.

MRS. GRAYSON (*driving herself*): No, I . . . I must finish. I only have my hotel room for one night.

CORKY: Yeah. Well . . . uh. (*Casual*) Far as that goes, we got an extra room at my house.

(*Mrs. Grayson looks startled.*)

CORKY (*shrugs*): Room's empty anyhow. Be no trouble to put you up for a couple of days.

MRS. GRAYSON (*choked*): That's very kind of you. Mr. Corcoran . . . could I . . . may I see that picture of your little boy again?

CORKY (*takes it out*): Sure.

(*Mrs. Grayson takes picture, she looks at it and quietly begins to cry.*)

CORKY: C'mon, let's go home.

(*Fade out to end.*)

By GABRIELLE ROY

# Luzina Takes a Holiday

**D**EEP within the Canadian province of Manitoba, remote in its melancholy region of lakes and wild waterfowl, there lies a tiny village barely noticeable amidst its skimpy fir trees. On the map you will find it called Meadow Portage, but it is known to the people who live thereabouts as Portage des Prés. To reach it you must cover a full thirty-two miles of jolty road beyond Rorketon, the terminus of the branch railroad and the nearest town.

In all, it contains a chapel, visited three or four times a year by an aged missionary, polyglot and loquacious; a boxlike structure built of new planks and serving as school for the handful of white children in the area; and another building, also of boards but a bit larger, the most important in the settlement, since it houses at once the store, the post office, and the telephone.

Somewhat further away you can see, in a clearing among the birches, two other dwellings which, together with the store-post-office, shelter all Portage des Prés's inhabitants.

## Lone Gasoline Pump

But I nearly forgot: in front of the largest structure, at the edge of the rough track leading to Rorketon, proudly stands a lone gasoline pump, complete with its large glass globe, ever awaiting the arrival of electricity. Beyond these few things, a wilderness of grass and wind.

One of the houses, indeed, possesses a front door, inserted at the level of its second floor, yet since no one has bothered to build for it either a landing or a flight of steps, nothing could better express the idea of utter uselessness.

Across the facade of the large building are painted the words "Bessette's

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**Book excerpt: From a remote spot in French Canada, Luzina left only once a year, and always returned with the same gift**

General Store." And that is absolutely all there is at Portage des Prés. It is the image of the final jumping off place. And yet the Tousignant family lived, some twenty years ago, even beyond this outpost.

To reach their home from Portage des Prés, you had to continue straight on beyond the gas pump, following the same crude road. At first glance you could scarcely make the road out, but finally you saw how it ran, thanks to two parallel bands of grass which remained a trifle flattened by the passage of the Indians' light buckboards. Only an old resident or a halfbreed guide could find his way along it, for at several points this track divided, and secondary tracks led through the bush to some trapper's cabin two or three miles away.

You had, then, to stick closely to the most direct road. And a few hours later, if you were riding in a buggy—a little sooner if traveling in one of those ancient Fords which still operate in those parts—you should reach the Big Water Hen River.

There you left Ford or buggy behind.

## By Canoe

The Tousignants had a canoe to cross the river. Were it on the further shore, someone would have to swim over to get it. You then continued downstream, wholly wrapped in such silence as is seldom found on earth—or rather, in the rustle of sedges, the beat of wings, in the thousands of tiny, hidden, secret, timid sounds, producing an effect in some way as restful as silence itself.

Clambering out on the opposite shore, you crossed on foot an island half a mile wide, covered with thick, uneven grass, mud holes, and, in summer, enor-

mous and famished mosquitoes swarming up by the million from the spongy ground.

You then reached another river. It was the Little Water Hen. The people of the region had had no great trouble in naming it—always in honor of its senior inhabitant, that small gray fowl which epitomized all its tedium and all its quietness. Apart from these two rivers, there was the Water Hen—unqualified—and there was Lake Water Hen. The area itself was known as the Water Hen Country. And it was endlessly peaceful, there, to watch the birds rising up everywhere from among the reeds and circling together in one sector of the heavens which they darkened with their multitude.

When you had crossed the Little Water Hen, you landed on a fair-sized island with few trees. A large flock of sheep were at pasture there, completely free and unfenced; had it not been for them, you would have thought the island uninhabited.

But there was a house built upon it.

Built of unsquared logs, level with the ground, longer than it was wide, it stood upon a very slight elevation on the island's surface, bare to the four winds of heaven.

## Adventures Afar

Here it was the Tousignants lived.

Of their eight handsome children, one alone had journeyed as far as the village of Sainte Rose du Lac to be treated for a very bad earache. This was the nearest French settlement in the area; it was situated even further away than Rorketon.

A few of the other children had from time to time accompanied their father when, two or three times a year, he

journeyed to Portage des Prés to get his orders from the owner of the ranch under his management.

It was the mother who traveled the most. Almost every year she of necessity went to Sainte Rose du Lac. If there were the slightest hitch, you could spend days getting there. All the same, since she quit her island approximately but once a year, this long, hard trip, frequently hazardous, always exhausting, had come to be regarded by Luzina Tousignant as her annual holiday.

Never did she refer to it far in advance before the children, for they were, you might say, too attached to their mother, very tender, very affectionate, and it was a painful business for them to let her go. They would cling fast to her skirts, begging her not to leave.

To her husband alone one fine day she would announce, with an odd look half laughter and half sorrow, "My holiday is not far off." Then she would depart. And in this changeless existence, it was the great, sole adventure.

#### Luzina's Holiday

This year it looked as though Luzina Tousignant could not undertake her usual trip. Her legs were swollen; she could not stand on them for more than an hour at a time, for she was a woman of considerable strength and weight, full of life, always on the go the moment her poor feet seemed a little better.

Hippolyte Tousignant did not like to let her leave under such circumstances. And then too, it was the very worst time of year. Nonetheless, Luzina laughed when she began to talk about her holiday. In midsummer or midwinter, if it were necessary, one could get away from the island, and even without too much trouble. But in spring a woman alone could not possibly run into greater risks, dangers, and misery than on the Portage des Prés trail. Hippolyte long tried to persuade Luzina she should not leave.

Compliant under all other circumstances, in this she remained adamant. Of course she had to go to Sainte Rose du Lac! What was more, she must consult a doctor there about the baby's eczema. One of the cream separator's parts had got dented; she would have it fixed. And for business reasons she would stay awhile at Rorketon.

She would take advantage of that visit to get some little idea of what people were wearing. "For," Luzina would say, "just because we live in a wild country is no reason we shouldn't be in style every so often." She gave a hundred reasons rather than admit that she took some small pleasure in getting

away from the empty horizon of the Little Water Hen.

And, after all, how could Luzina ever have seen a crowd, a real crowd of at least a hundred persons, such as is to be found on Saturday nights along Rorketon's main street? How could she ever have been able to talk to persons other than her husband or her children, who, the moment she opened her mouth, already knew what she was going to say? How could she ever have those rare joys of novelty, of satisfied curiosity, of glimpses of the world, had she not had a wholly different reason for traveling—an eminently serious and pressing reason!

She left toward the end of March. The Little Water Hen was still frozen hard enough to allow crossing it on foot. The Big Water Hen, however, was free of ice at midstream. The boat was drawn over the ice like a sledge until it could be launched in the open water.

Luzina was installed on its bottom boards, a bearskin over her knees, warmed bricks at her feet. Hippolyte had rigged a piece of rough canvas above her, somewhat in the shape of a small tent. Thus fully sheltered and showing no sign of fear, Luzina was keenly interested in everything that happened during the crossing. From time to time she thrust her smiling face through the slit in the canvas and remarked contentedly, "I'm as well off as the Queen!"

#### She's Off!

Two of the children, one pushing and the other pulling, helped their father maneuver the boat on the ice, and it was a job that required a lot of care, since no one could tell at exactly what spot the ice would begin to yield. Without any of them getting too soaked, they reached the river's free-flowing water. Large chunks of ice were floating in the current; they had to paddle hard to avoid them and to make headway against the Big Water Hen's rapid flow. Then the boat was hauled up on the other side—not without trouble, for the footing was far from firm.

The youngest children had remained on the little island, and this was the moment for their final good-bys to their mother. All of them were weeping. Swallowing their tears, and without the least outcry, they understood that it was too late to dissuade their mother from her journey.

Their tiny hands, never still for an instant, fluttered toward Luzina. One of the little girls carried the baby in her arms and made the infant wave continuously. All five of them were huddled together, so that they made one minute spot against the widest and most

deserted of the world's horizons. Then was it that Luzina lost a great part of her gaiety; she looked for her handkerchief but could not find it, so encumbered was she with heavy clothing. She sniffled.

"Be good," she urged her children, raising her voice which the wind carried, though not at all in their direction. "Mind what your father tells you."

They tried to talk from one shore to the other, but the conversation made no sense. The children recalled the things they had wanted and begged for the whole year through; despite their grief, these things they remembered very well.

"A blackboard, Mama!" cried one of them.

"A pencil with an eraser, Mama!" another implored.

Luzina was not sure she understood what they were saying, but, taking a chance, she promised: "I'll bring you picture postcards."

She knew she made no mistake in promising postcards. Her children were crazy about them, especially those which showed very high buildings, streets jammed with cars, and—wonder of wonders—railway stations.

Her husband lending her a hand, her older boys going ahead to beat a path in the snow, Luzina Tousignant reached the trail, and they all stood waiting for the arrival of the postman who, once a week, if it were at all possible, carried the mail from Portage des Prés to an Indian reservation some fifteen miles further north on Lake Water Hen.

They were much afraid that they had missed the mailman, or else that he had decided, because of the wretched condition of the road, to postpone his trip a week. Pierre-Emmanuel-Roger and Philippe-Auguste-Emile came very close to hoping for such a mishap; so even did Hippolyte Tousignant, who suggested timidly, "The postman will not dare set out in weather like this. If you were to come back home, Luzina . . . we'd manage all the same."

"Come now, you know very well that won't do," she replied with a smile of regret, mingled with a hint of mockery, which above all seemed to reproach Hippolyte for his lack of practical good sense.

She looked fixedly up the trail, more determined than ever. After having overcome so many obstacles it would be a fine thing for her to have to return home. A very light snow, mixed with rain, began to fall.

"If only I could go with you," Hippo-

Photograph on opposite page by Georgia Engelhard from Frederic Lewis.





lyte was saying, as he had said on all her previous departures.

And, just as she had the last time, she agreed: "Yes, indeed! To take the trip together, the two of us, what fun that would be! But, poor man, surely someone has to keep an eye on things and be in command while I'm not there."

They said no more.

Far away in the vast, changeless solitude a horse came into view. all in a lather, and on the seat of the sleigh behind it, a great ball of fur, from which emerged a sad yellow mustache, a thick cloud of vapor, and, held, aloft, a sway-whip.

It was the postman.

#### Nick Sluzick

He drew near. Now you could distinguish his bushy eyebrows from the brown fur of his winter hat; you could see the gleam of the silver thread which always hung from the postman's nose in cold weather; you could make out his tobacco-stained teeth when he gave his mare a throaty order.

Having reached the little Tousignant group without a word of greeting, his frowning glance fixed on Luzina alone, he tightened the reins, stopped, and waited.

For this Nick Sluzick was an odd character. In a country where people were often silent for lack of anything new to talk about, he beat everyone for taciturnity. He was said to have managed his business, accepted errands, done favors, fulfilled his postman's duties, made love, and procreated children—and all this without ever having uttered more than a scant dozen sentences.

Luzina was installed alongside this unsociable companion, he moving over a trifle to make a little space for her to sit down. Talkative as she was, Nick Sluzick's amazing uncommunicativeness ever remained her principal—indeed, her sole—trial throughout the journey.

Pierre-Emmanuel-Roger had brought a lantern, which he now lit and slipped under the covers at his mother's feet. He spread a bison skin over her and on top of it a piece of oilcloth to prevent the fur from getting soaked. With all her coverings, Luzina had almost totally disappeared, save for her eyes, which peered out from above a heavy-muffler.

They were clear, blue eyes, rather large, full of affection, and, at that moment, moist with sorrow. All four of them were looking at each other with the same expression of sad stupor, as though these Tousignants, so united in their isolation, were almost unable to conceive of being apart. And suddenly

#### About the Author

Gabrielle Roy was born in the wide open spaces of Manitoba Province in Canada, the sparsely-settled country she describes so vividly in *Luzina Takes a Holiday*. She was the youngest of eight children in a family of French-Canadian pioneer stock. After finishing convent and normal school, she became a teacher, and began to write on the side. Before long she was able to make a living as a free lance writer of stories and feature articles for the Canadian publications. Out of each year she managed to salvage several months to devote to her first novel, *The Tin Flute*, which turned out to be a Literary Guild selection. She is married and is living in Canada.

these people, who thought they had long since exhausted every subject of conversation, discovered a wholly new one and began to chatter.

"Do be careful, all of you, about fire," urged Luzina, lowering the scarf which covered her mouth.

"Yes. And you be careful not to freeze on your trip," said Hippolyte.

"Above all, don't starve yourselves," Luzina added. "There's plenty of flour and lard. Just make pancakes if you don't feel much like cooking. And you, Pierre-Emmanuel-Roger, be a help to your father."

The two eldest were not the only Tousignant children to have compound appellations. As though better to people the solitude where she dwelt, Luzina had given to each of her children a litany of names drawn from the pages of history or from the occasional novel that came her way. Among the children who had remained behind were Roberta-Louise-Celestine, Josephine-Yolande, Andre-Aimable-Sebastien; the youngest, a fifteen-months-old baby, answered to the name of Juliette-Heloise.

"You'll be very careful that Juliette-Heloise doesn't swallow any pins," cried Luzina.

It was the last advice she gave her loved ones. Nick Sluzick couldn't waste any more time. Of all human actions, none seemed to him more useless and unnecessary than saying good-bye. Either you did not go away or you went away. In the latter case, the event itself was explicit enough not to require comment.

He spat over the side of the sled. With one hand he twirled his long yellow mustache, with the other he picked up the reins. And they were off through the soft snow, lying uneven on the ground, here in hummocks, there in hol-

lows, which was the road to Portage des Prés.

#### Luzina Arrives

It might be interesting to describe the difficulties of Luzina Tousignant's journey, seated next to her unsociable muzhik, who only once opened his mouth and then to ask her to stay put on her end of the seat since otherwise the sleigh might upset. To tell how, when she reached Portage des Prés, she had to wait for a week before the next mail left for Rorketon. How she spent those seven days at the store-post-office, which also after a fashion served the settlement as an inn. How bored Luzina was while she waited, exasperated at this mischance and greatly fearing that she would get to Rorketon too late. How, when she finally left Portage des Prés, there was a cold wind blowing which grew in violence and froze one of her ears. To recount these few mishaps might be interesting were it not that her trip home was also to be rich in vicissitudes.

Once the serious purpose of her trip had been accomplished and her business finished at Sainte Rose du Lac, Luzina's most pressing desire was to get back by train to Rorketon, where she hoped to find promptly some means of returning home.

She was made that way. All year long it seemed to her, shut off on her island, that never would she have her fill of seeing Rorketon's brightly illuminated shop windows, the electric lights which burned all night along its main street, the many buggies that thronged there, the plank sidewalks and the people moving about on them. At Rorketon Luzina gathered the material for the tales she would tell her family for month after month, practically until her next trip.

Yet once she had spent a few days at Rorketon, she had had all she wanted of it. Nothing seemed to her warmer or more human than that lonely gray house which, atop its mound between the willows, looked out upon nothing except the quiet and monotonous Little Water Hen.

She worried about the children. She wondered whether, while chopping holes in the ice on the Little Water Hen in order to fish for pike, they might not all have fallen in and perished as they attempted to save each other.

She pictured to herself a flood which might cover the whole island and force her husband and her poor children to clamber up upon the roof of the house. Hers was a mind extraordinarily adept at imagining, the moment she was away from home, all the mishaps which could befall her loved ones.

She was on edge.

But the coming of spring had been unusually delayed that year by heavy snowfalls followed by rain and finally by renewed cold. The wretched road between Rorketon and Portage des Prés had become impassable. Even the mailman refused to chance it.

#### How to Get Home?

Now in those countries of the North, everyone takes it for granted that when the mailman cannot get through, no one can get through. The mail in that awesome wilderness remains the great, the most important business, and only obstacles truly insurmountable can stop it.

Nevertheless, Luzina everywhere made inquiries—at the post office, in the stores, at the hotel—to see whether someone might know of a person who was going to try to reach Portage des Prés in spite of everything.

At that moment the town was full of travelers, detained in Rorketon precisely because of the bad condition of the roads. And so Luzina made a number of acquaintanceships. To some few of these she would even send letters later on, giving news of her return and of events at the ranch, so interested in her had these people seemed and so anxious to wish her well.

Because of her affability Luzina had made a number of friends during her travels. In fact Luzina said that meeting likable people was the real pleasure of traveling. She enjoyed being helpful to those who happened to be at hand, and to such good purpose that rarely did she fail to find in her journeying agreeable people ready to do as much for her. This time, however, no one could help her. She was advised to speak to the postman on the Rorketon-Portage des Prés route, who would deliver her to the place where Nick Sluzick took over the mail.

Now this Rorketon postman was the most baffling fellow of all. Ivan Bratislovski nearly always said he was going to do the opposite of what he did, a kind of peasant's stratagem against fate. And probably for the same reason he complained endlessly. At all hours of the day he was to be found in the Chinese restaurant, eager to pick a quarrel with anyone who might have dared deny that he, Ivan Bratislovski, lived a dog's life. Were you only to agree with him on that point, the little Ruthenian could prove himself most useful.

Luzina was unaware of this method of appeasement. Having sent a small boy twice to ask the Ruthenian whether he would be leaving the following morning, she had been informed that "Ivan Bratislovski's horse had been injured, that the sleigh was very small to

carry a woman traveling with a lot of belongings, and that, in any case, he was on the point of offering his resignation to the postal authorities."

What this meant was that Ivan Bratislovski would shortly take his chances and start for Portage des Prés, which, of course, was beyond Luzina's guessing. Meanwhile a merchant from Dauphin arrived at the hotel where Luzina was staying. He was in a hurry, anxious to get to Portage des Prés with an eye to a deal in muskrat skins. He rented a horse and sleigh. The next morning he left, Luzina with him.

#### Hazardous Journey

The two travelers had scarcely passed Rorketon's last farmsteads when they found themselves in a lonely expanse, entirely covered with a thin layer of sparkling ice.

The road was as completely frozen as the fields, as all the countryside, flat and lifeless. At times it stretched out like a congealed pond, blue and level; the runners of the sleigh began to slide to and fro as though they were waltzing. In other places the frost had solidified the hollows of the road so that the vehicle plunged, reared up, crashed down again.

The horse was soon in a lather. The ice shattered beneath its shoes in long sharp splinters which cruelly wounded it. Luzina could scarcely bear watching the poor beast, and despite her desire to get home as soon as possible, she kept urging the merchant to spare the animal.

The ice grew smoother and smoother. At one corner that they took a little too quickly the sleigh upset, tumbling Luzina, her suitcase, and all her bundles some feet off the road. Her companion ran to her help. Her heavy clothing had protected her, her and her most fragile

gift, which as she fell she clasped within her arms. She had not even a scratch. She began to laugh, and, after a thoughtful moment, her companion did too.

He was a small, swarthy man, active, thin, always worrying and calculating. He had barely left Rorketon at daybreak when he began regretting that he had taken this woman with him. She might be injured if they had an accident. Were that to happen, her husband would probably claim damages. He had been shaken by that very fear when Luzina stumbled back to her feet, more nimble than ever, and began to laugh.

At once optimism replaced anxiety in Merchant Zlutkin's changeable soul. Such a woman, healthy and fearless, could not bring bad luck to him who helped her. On the contrary, he should put himself under her star, which was certainly a fortunate one.

A half an hour after the accident Zlutkin was still chuckling over it, filled with amazement and henceforward certain that his good deed would be repaid a hundred-fold, in fine furs, in choice skins which he would acquire at small expense in Portage des Prés.

Seeing him so well disposed, Luzina began to chat. She could not prevent her generous nature from offering what she had to give, which amounted to the stories of half-a-hundred adventures in her life.

In the goodness of her heart she really hoped that by means of all her tales she could distract her companion from the dangers continually confronting them both. Yet she feared she might seem selfish if she talked only about her own good fortune. She asked the fur merchant whether he was married. Stout Luzina's motherly kindness, her warm, inquiring eyes, her eager interest in others, her whole nature invited confidence.

Merchant Zlutkin took advantage of an interval when the road was a trifle less slippery to show her a photo of his wife. It portrayed a plump young woman of dark complexion. Zlutkin thought himself that he loved her dearly. For a moment the business he was in such a hurry to transact ceased tormenting him. Such was Luzina's power. She disposed people to become aware that they had reasons for being happy.

#### A Wonderful Life

When they were tired of talking, they rested by reflecting on the pleasant things that had been said.

Luzina's life, at the only times when she could give it much thought, while she was jolting along on her travels, seemed truly wonderful. Dwelling so

#### Crossword Puzzle Answer



Sure, you can turn this upside down if you want to. But why peek and spoil your fun? Puzzle is an inside back cover of this issue.

far from all the world, she had encountered human beings of all races and characters. The most exciting romance could not have offered her so great a variety of people: little old bearded Poles, Slav postmen, halfbreed guides. Moreover, traveling had taught her lessons of an unexpected sort: it had shown her that human nature everywhere is excellent.

Before they had covered much more ground, the sky began to cloud over. Strange red streaks, low on the horizon, foretold a change in the weather. The two travelers were obliged to find a stopping place.

It turned out to be one of those solitary farms such as were to be found every three or four miles along the Portage des Prés road.

The house was poor; it contained only one room, furnished in back, behind the stove, with a number of beds. Yet the moment Luzina entered their home, shivering with cold, the man and woman of the house came forward to greet her, smiling, their arms extended to relieve her of all her bundles. They led her to the stove and at once offered her food, all this with so much alacrity that she could not harbor the least doubt of the sincerity of their welcome, even though it was expressed in a foreign tongue.

After supper Luzina settled herself for an interesting evening.

The family were Icelanders, a people with whom she had not yet had occasion to become acquainted. She noticed that they constantly drank very strong coffee and that, instead of putting sugar in their cups, they placed a lump on their tongues or between their teeth before drinking the burning liquid. When they began talking in their own language, she was even more delighted. Peculiarities, customs, and a language that were foreign to her, rather than putting her off, seemed to give life an inexhaustible attraction.

She did not want to be outdone in amiability by such kindly hosts. So, even though she had no assurance that they understood her, she began giving an account of the road she would have to travel to reach her home on the island in the Little Water Hen. Thereupon she dug into her purse, seeking some little keepsake she might offer their children. She had only the crayons and the postcards bought for her own off-spring; she hesitated a lot, but reflecting—and with good reason—that her own would not have hesitated to share their crayons with the young Bjorgssons, she beckoned to them, and the crayons were duly distributed. Seemingly the parents were touched, for they arose again to offer coffee.

The next morning the travelers had a slightly less slippery road. Yet they did not reach Portage des Prés until midafternoon. The worst of the trip was still ahead of Luzina.

### The Last Lap

That North country, with its vast, sparse forests and its equally vast lakes, has, of all regions, the most capricious climate. From one day to another the ice melted on the trail between Portage des Prés and the Tousignant ranch; you could almost see the snow disappear.

Another cold wave had been expected, but during the night Luzina spent at the settlement store a south wind had blown up.

In less than twenty-four hours the whole countryside had turned into a kind of perilous marsh, deep and treacherous. Under the flaccid snow a man's foot found water everywhere, everywhere seeping water.

All the same, Luzina decided to leave. Either she would succeed in reaching home that very day, or else she would have to wait idly for weeks until the road dried out. For her children she still had some postcards, and, herself childlike, she could not wait to give them their present, so that she might watch their guileless eyes brighten with joy.

For Hippolyte she had a handsome necktie, which he would have a chance to wear on his next trip, within a few months. She was itching with desire to tell about how the Bjorgssons had received her. Above all she had with her, this year like the other years, the gift of gifts, so precious that Luzina dared not entrust it to anyone and kept it scrupulously wrapped.

This gift was supposed to be a great surprise for her family, which, truth to tell, rather expected it, since Luzina, ever generous, would surely come home this time with as much as she had always brought before. Her happiness, like the wind of springtime, the warm wind, alive and friendly, could not wait to spread abroad.

### Luzina Bears Home a Gift

Hippolyte would scold her for having taken to the road on so bad a day. So much the worse! Today you could still chance the trip; tomorrow opportunity might be lacking, or the trail might be even worse.

She gathered her things together and through the store window began to watch for the moment when Nick Sluzick, lately arrived, would be ready to depart.

At last Luzina saw that the mail bags had been piled up on the back of the sleigh. Immediately, she rushed over to

take her place beside a Nick Sluzick more gloomy than ever; without good-day or greeting, without comment or question, the ancient Ukrainian briskly gave his mare the whip.

Today he was especially out of humor; he had had all the trouble in the world getting through certain stretches of the road, and he suspected that the return trip would be even more disagreeable. Not that Nick Sluzick feared the water holes for the sake of his own tough hide. It took more than an icy bath to disconcert him. But he did not like to see a woman running such risks. In general he had no fondness for lugging women along with him—women, children, breakable objects, in short anything fragile. In danger he preferred to be alone. When it came down to it, he always preferred to be alone. A man needed to be alone to ponder his own affairs. What was more, if this Water Hen country were to be any more settled, in the end he, Nick Sluzick, would have to seek refuge further north.

They reached a veritable slough. Bella, the mare, refused to venture into it. The old man raised his whip. The water came half-way to Bella's body, about half the height of the sleigh, flush with its floorboards. Luzina lifted her most precious package above her head, thinking less of herself than of this irreplaceable gift. They passed through the deepest of the water. Luzina, her arms laden, quietly sank back into the seat.

Toward the end of the afternoon one of the Tousignant children, posted on the Little Water Hen shore, heard the summons on the bark trumpet whereby it had been agreed that Luzina would indicate her arrival at the bank of the Big Water Hen.

Immediately Hippolyte and Pierre-Emmanuel-Roger launched the boat. At that last moment two more children clambered in. Hippolyte had not the heart to send them back, so eager were they to see their mother again. They rowed quickly. They raced across the little island. From afar they could already see the motionless sleigh and two human figures, one of them peevish, annoyed at the delay, and the other waving excitedly, perched high on the seat.

They crossed the Big Water Hen. Now they were within hailing distance, and they cried out to each other. And then, a bit thinner, a trifle pale, but laughing with shyness and emotion, her face wrinkled in joy, Luzina stepped out upon the ground. And in her arms, as happened whenever she returned from her business trips, Luzina carried the baby she had gone to Sainte Rose du Lac to bring into the world.



# What Do You Remember?

## A Quiz Based on the Contents of This Issue

### Miss Moonlight

Which of the following statements most closely expresses the central idea of this story?

- a. A lot of boys take girls too much for granted.
- b. Every girl enjoys being just a boy's "pal," but there comes a time when she wants him to recognize that she's a girl, too.
- c. If a girl wants a boy to notice her, she'd better study up on moths.

### King in Shag

1. Write A before the quotations which express how Russ felt about the mammoth at the beginning of his visit, and B before the one which describes the feeling he later developed for the huge beast.

- a. "I realized it must be a granddad brownie, and I yearned for a shot at him."
- b. "To see it was to gaze down measureless corridors of the centuries . . . when a hundred giants such as this had clashed their tusks from Spain to the Arctic."
- c. "I mentioned that I'd like to try a quick-frozen mammoth steak."

2. Check the reasons why John might have shot Russ rather than allow him to kill the mammoth.

- a. John was afraid that Russ would take personal credit for having found and killed the animal.
- b. This gigantic beast was a symbol of the very dawn of the world and was, as such, more important to John than any single human being.
- c. John "loved all great beasts," and the mammoth was the greatest he knew—an enduring reminder of the majesty and strength of nature.

### The Trespasser

1. Check the statement which best explains why this story is entitled, "The Trespasser."

- a. Steve's family looked upon Lt. Merrick as a trespasser come to remind them of their loss.
- b. Lt. Merrick himself felt that he was a trespasser; he felt guilty and apologetic in the presence of the family whose son had died to save his life.

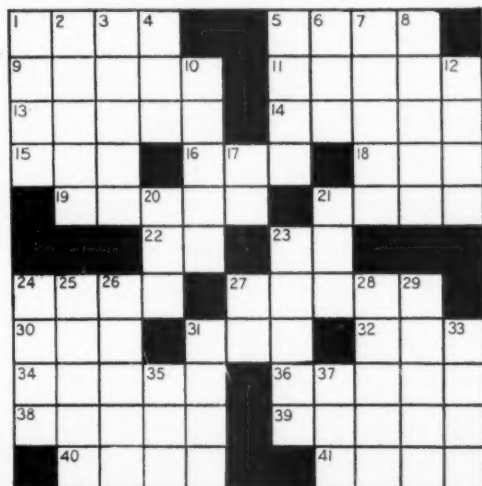
2. What do you think Lt. Merrick had in mind when he reflected that "he had forgotten there were homes like this still left in the world?" Check any statements which apply.

- a. Homes containing such familiar, homey objects as rubber plants, colored lithographs, and upright pianos.
- b. Places where trust and friendship exist instead of the fear and killing of the battlefield.
- c. Homes built to be occupied by wholesome, God-fearing people who lead good and simple lives.

### Answers in Teacher Edition

## Root of the Matter

● There are 48 words in this puzzle. The words starred with an asterisk (\*) are all roots from which a great many words are formed. See how many of these starred words (there are 17) you can get. Allow yourself 4 points for each starred word and one point for each of the others. Add a bonus of 1 point if you get all the starred words right. If you get all the words, plus the bonus, you should have a total score of 100. Answers are on page 31, but don't look now. Wait until you have completed the puzzle. Why spoil your fun?



### ACROSS

- 1. Crush to a pulp.
- \* 5. Root meaning "to take" as in "—ure the castle."
- \* 9. Root meaning "other" as in "—nate."
- 11. A measure of land.
- \* 13. Greek root meaning "nerve" as in "—tic."
- \* 14. Root meaning "to watch" as in "micro—."
- \* 15. Root meaning "city" as in "sub—an and —ane."
- \* 16. Root meaning "to do" as in "trans— and —ion."
- \* 18. Root meaning "way" as in "—duct and tri—l."
- 19. Russian Emperors.
- 21. What people sleep in.
- 22. Abbrev. for "manuscript."
- 23. Fa, sol, la, —, do.
- 24. Collected facts.
- \* 27. Greek root meaning "light," as in "the cameraman's —graphy."
- 30. First woman.
- \* 31. Root meaning "heart": "the meeting was —dial."
- 32. Abbrev. for "His Royal Highness."
- 34. Pertaining to Norway.
- 36. First name of Mrs. Peron of Argentina.
- 38. Fatigued.
- 39. Between seven and nine.
- 40. Number on a calendar.
- \* 41. See 27 Across. This is another form of the root meaning "light" as in "—phorescent."

### DOWN

- \* 1. Root meaning "by hand" as in "—facture."
- 2. Vigilant; on guard.
- 3. What remains in the check book when the checks are gone.
- 4. Possessive form of "she."
- 5. All the actors in a play.
- 6. Abbrev. for "accountant."
- \* 7. Root meaning "to test" as in "ap—, dis—."
- 8. Lukewarm.
- 10. A lion does this.
- 12. One sails the seven —.
- 17. Abbrev. for "Civil Service."
- \* 20. Root meaning "love" as in "—teur and —tory."
- \* 21. Root meaning "life" as in "—logy and auto—graphy."
- 23. Between two and four.
- 24. To make an indentation in a surface.
- 25. Shun; stay away from.
- \* 26. Latin root meaning "land" as in "—in and —ce."
- 27. Abbrev. for "Post Office."
- 28. Part of the leg.
- \* 29. Root meaning "right" as in "—dox Church."
- \* 31. Root meaning "to go away": as "at low tide the waters re—."
- 33. Head coverings.
- 35. To place something, as on a table.
- 37. Short for "Very Important Person."

# Chucklebait



**H**ERE'S a Churchill story that's new to us. If you've heard it, sorry—but here goes.

Winston Churchill had had a particularly sharp exchange on the floor of the House of Commons with one of his bitterest adversaries. This was during Britain's dark days in World War II and the point the Prime Minister had debated with his critic was one involving strategy against the enemy.

After the debate Churchill happened to brush up against his critic as they were leaving the House. The critic seized the moment to press his argument further. "I am a firm believer," he said, "in fighting the enemy with his own weapons."

Churchill took a deep puff on his cigar and replied, "Tell me, how long does it take you to sting a bee?"

We found this story, along with hundreds of others, thumbing through *Anthology of Anecdotes*, a volume edited by Maxwell Droke and published by Grosset and Dunlap. The book is literally a mine of funny stories, most of them involving the great or the near-great or the would-be great. Here are some others that we think you'll like.

## Standing Room Only

Even when traveling incognito Mark Twain seemed to leave a trail of wit behind him. In the course of a lecture trip, one story goes, he arrived in a small town and, dropping into a restaurant before his lecture, fell into conversation with his waiter.

"You a stranger?" asked the waiter.

"Yes," Mark Twain said. "First time I've been here."



"Yes, I said standing room only!"

"You chose a good time to come," the waiter volunteered. "Mark Twain is going to lecture tonight. You'll go?"

"Oh, I guess so."

"Have you bought your ticket?"

"Not yet."

"But everything is sold out! You'll have to stand."

"How very annoying!" Mark Twain said, with a sigh. "I never saw such luck! I always have to stand when that fellow lectures."

\* \* \*

Many a teacher will sympathize with the professor who was approached by a student who had been loafing for most of the semester. "Do you think that if I 'bone up' for the next two weeks," the student asked anxiously, "I could pass the exam?"

"Sir," replied the prof, "you make me think of a thermometer in a cold room. You can make it register higher by holding your thumb on the bulb, but you won't be warming the room."

## Passing the Buck

Sometimes the simplest solution to a problem seems to be the easiest to overlook:

An Army colonel was lecturing a class of officer candidates. "A 40-foot flagpole has fallen down," he said. "You have a sergeant and a squad of ten men. How do you erect the flagpole again?"

The candidates offered suggestions involving a block-and-tackle, derrick, and so on.

"You're all wrong," replied the seasoned officer. "You'd say, 'Sergeant, get that flagpole up.'"

\* \* \*

Fritz Kreisler, the violinist, tells this on himself:

"I was walking with a friend one day when we chanced to pass a large fish market. There was a fine catch of cod-fish, arranged in rows. Somehow, those wide open mouths and staring eyes fascinated me. Then I remembered.

"Clutching my friend in frantic haste, I exclaimed: 'Heavens! That reminds me—I should be playing at a concert!'"

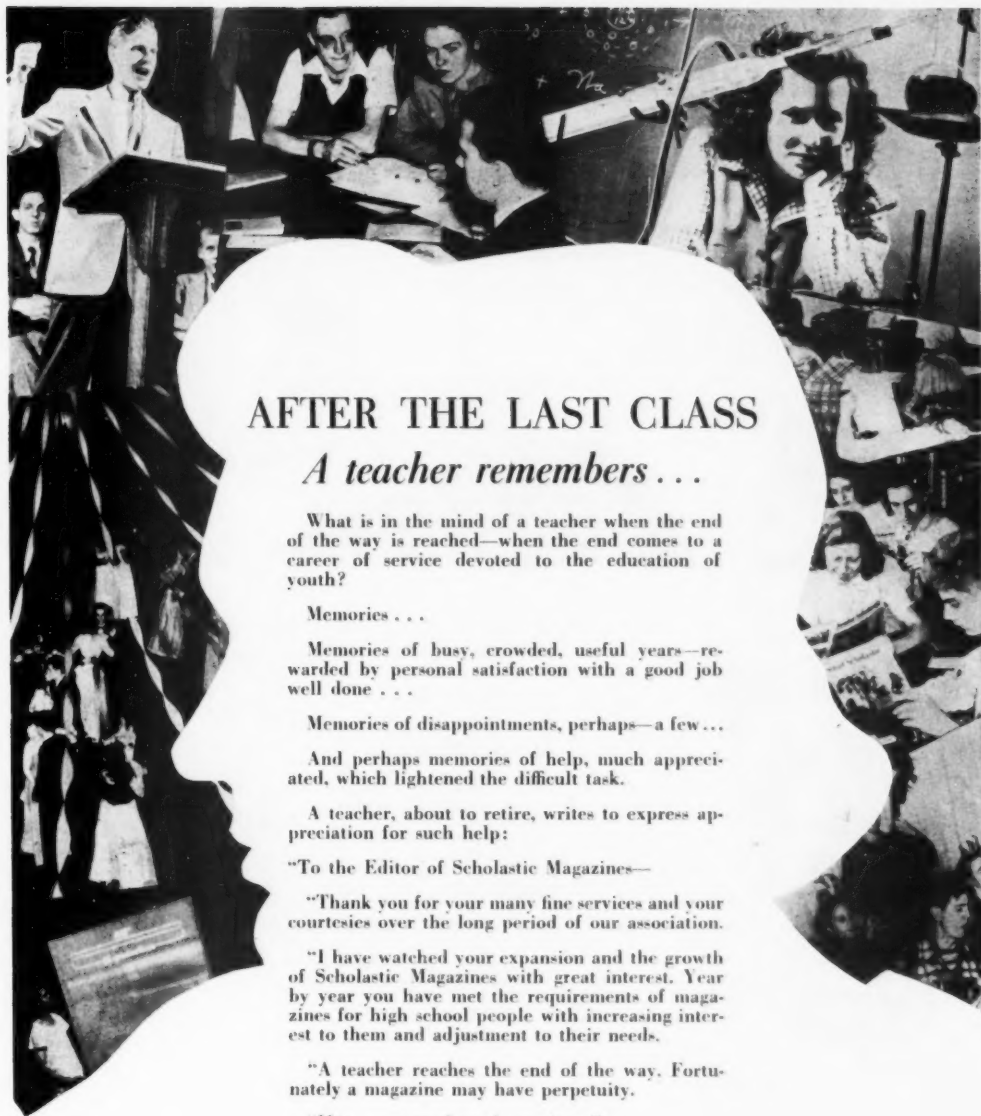
## Squelched Genius

Here's a story about two promising young stunt actors from New York who went to London to set the English capital on fire. They gave a dress rehearsal of their clever act before one of the big booking agents.

When they had finished he said, "Very good, boys; but it runs twenty-five minutes and that's pretty long. If you'll cut it down to eight minutes we may bill you."

"Eight minutes!" cried one of the team, glaring down at him. "Why, man, we *bare* eight minutes!"

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## AFTER THE LAST CLASS

### *A teacher remembers . . .*

What is in the mind of a teacher when the end of the way is reached—when the end comes to a career of service devoted to the education of youth?

Memories . . .

Memories of busy, crowded, useful years—rewarded by personal satisfaction with a good job well done . . .

Memories of disappointments, perhaps—a few . . .

And perhaps memories of help, much appreciated, which lightened the difficult task.

A teacher, about to retire, writes to express appreciation for such help:

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"Thank you for your many fine services and your courtesies over the long period of our association.

"I have watched your expansion and the growth of Scholastic Magazines with great interest. Year by year you have met the requirements of magazines for high school people with increasing interest to them and adjustment to their needs.

"A teacher reaches the end of the way. Fortunately a magazine may have perpetuity.

"May your good work continue."

Sincerely,

Miss L. M.\*

*\*Original letter on file.*

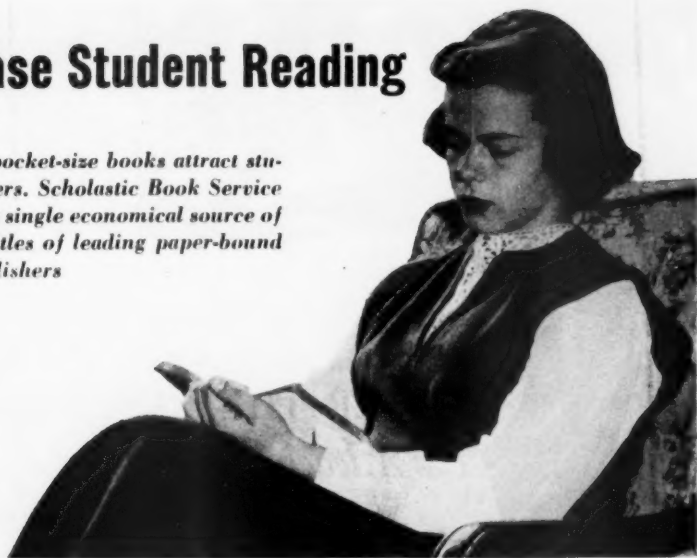
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